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St. Joseph Worker





HISTORY
OF
GEORGE GODFREY.
VOL. III.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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GEORGE GODFREY.

CHAPTER I.

*I am reprieved at the last moment—A prison breakfast—
Solemn admonitions, and Newgate pleasantries.*

PART of the cookery of the prison is, or at least was then, performed in the lobby, and a savoury smell issued from a huge copper which was charged with the dinner of the day. The ordinary, and Dr. Fudge, seemed to snuff it up with eagerness, and to look as if they would have had no objection to take a basin of soup, before proceeding further, with the business of the morning.

But however this might be, the former reverend gentleman, proved that he was not disposed to let his own comfort interfere with the public service, by briskly passing up the steps

to assist Randall, who was already under the hands of the executioner.

After all that I had seen, and thought on the subject of the business then in progress, it may be supposed that I was fully prepared, for whatever could now meet my eye. I had persuaded myself, that such was the case, but must frankly confess, that I experienced a shock not to be described, when I saw poor Randall, his neckcloth already off, and the halter round his neck, and at that moment being tied to the beam above. "Changed" indeed was his appearance, "in the twinkling of an eye." Never can I forget the ghastly aspect of his visage, as he looked towards me from under the cap, which had been drawn half over his eyelids. I had little time to remark on him, for the hangman having descended from the steps, by means of which, he had reached the fatal beam, he moved them a little nearer the door, to the place which Wildfire was to occupy, who was now called to the platform, and assisted to mount it, by the benevolent gentleman, who up to that moment had

continued to pray with him. He could scarcely sustain himself, and begged for mercy, first from those near him, next from the spectators, whose low murmur of pity, I could distinctly hear, and finally from heaven.

I reflected that in the course of another minute, it would be my turn to proceed to the scaffold. The blood seemed to rush into my face, as I prepared to encounter the gaze of expectant thousands. I saw that Wildfire's rope had been adjusted, and that the steps were again being removed, and hastily turned to Mr. Haversham, to receive his last adieu.

It was then, that he beckoned, and the bystanders seemed to make way for him, to pass to the interior of the prison. I heard the ordinary recommence reading the burial service. Mr. Haversham had advanced a step or two, and again beckoned. I saw the sign, but did not answer it. My thoughts were occupied with the prayer then being addressed to the Deity, not to desert his creatures in the last sad moments of their being, and while my attention was thus engaged, I heard a loud sudden

noise, followed by a subdued expression of horror. The drop had fallen, as I supposed, by accident, and my late unhappy companions were already suspended.

Again Mr. Haversham beckoned to me, and I now perceived, that the rope, of which I had been the bearer, was no longer about my person. He spoke to me, but a rush from the platform prevented me from hearing what he said. The word “breakfast,” was muttered by the ordinary as he passed me, and it was repeated by the under sheriff. I was all amazement and confusion. Both the sheriffs addressed me at the same moment, but I could not understand what was said. This, however, perplexed as I was, I began clearly to comprehend, that my late companions had, and that I had not, been executed.

But having passed into one of the passages through which I had walked in procession a few minutes before, my hands were unpinioned, and I was informed that his Majesty had granted me a reprieve during pleasure, which had not reached the prison till after seven

o'clock that morning. It was thought an act of humanity to those who were to suffer, not to mention the fact, to wake in them any hope that they would also be spared, and one of the sheriffs remarked, it was no unkindness to me, to make me go through part of the awful ceremonial, as he trusted what I had felt, and what I had witnessed, would prove a salutary warning.

Having delivered himself of this speech, apparently much to his own satisfaction and relief, he turned away, enjoying the fervent admiration, which he took it for granted such a specimen of piety and eloquence, could not fail to inspire. Not knowing what I did, I walked after him. The doors were opened as he advanced, and no one offered to close them against me. Wondering at the narrow escape which I had had, I continued to go forward, till I found myself in the Sessions House, and saw a door opened for the sheriff, which he was about to enter, when looking round he saw me, and exhibited some symptoms of surprise, at my being so near him.

“ You must not come here,” cried one of the officers of the prison, who had followed me in silence, not exactly knowing, but what I did, was in compliance with the order of the important functionary who is supreme in power on such occasions. He now correctly read in the sheriff’s countenance, that I attended unbidden.

I immediately turned to place myself at his disposal, when I saw Mr. Haversham close to me, with the sheriff his friend, of whom I have before had occasion to speak. The latter heard what had just been said, and now interposed, by saying,

“ Never mind him, officer. You may leave this poor fellow to me.”

This was enough for the person who had accosted me, and he at once drew back. The sheriff then said,

“ Step in here, my good man—come in and rest yourself.”

I followed him into the room, which he was entering while he spoke, and into which, at the same time, he ushered Mr. Haversham. The

apartment was a spacious one, and in the centre of it, beneath a large skylight, a breakfast table was spread, well furnished with eatables, tea, and coffee, round which were seated the sheriff, the ordinary, Dr. Fudge, the under sheriff, one of the city marshals, a gentleman, whom I afterwards learned was a hop-merchant, and two or three others.

Mr. Haversham was requested by the sheriff to take his seat at the table, and a chair at some little distance from it, was pointed out to me, on which I was at liberty to sit. The eyes of the whole party were fixed on me. All expressed great satisfaction that I had been spared. With this kindness however, I thought a distance of manner was to be perceived, which I had not observed before. It a little wounded my pride, to find that I seemed to be no longer the interesting personage I had been, while my life was in danger. Though I had seen before, that friends were apt to change with circumstances, I was not prepared to expect, the sudden alteration in my affairs would so suddenly make those shy, who had been

most cordial and familiar, while it was expected that I should be hanged.

But perhaps this was all fancy. I believe I have elsewhere stated, that excessive sensibility was always one of my failings, and I had lately been treated with such peculiar attention, that I was more susceptible than ever.

My feelings were a little ruffled, at finding some distinction made between me, and the rest of the company. I had lately been so much sought after, that I had almost begun to think the circumstance of my being a convict, entitled me to distinction, in any society.

It was not the object of a breakfast that made me feel rather out of temper, for in truth I was not hungry, but it was the slight put upon me. The slight was the thing, that annoyed me.

I was however silent, but the rest of the company became very talkative. They expressed satisfaction that the sufferings of the men who were then hanging, were now at an end, and then they congratulated me on the circumstance of mine not having been ended

as well as theirs. I was puzzled to make out whether they were better pleased, that my friends had been hanged, or that I had been spared.

While these expressions of satisfaction at what had, and at what had not taken place, were exchanged, the ordinary was helping those near him at table to tongue, as handily, as if the office had not been new to him. His deportment and speech, were still appropriately solemn. His address to the sheriff, then operating on a feathered sufferer, who had been handed over to him for dissection—"I'll take a morsel of fowl," was in the same awfully euphonious tone, in which he had a few moments before read, "though worms destroy my body." I know not how it was, but these still tingled in my ear; and though in no humour for wagging, a thought stole over me, that if indeed worms were soon to destroy *his body*, from the breakfast energy which he manifested, they were likely to have a plentiful feast.

When the company had got into full siphon, and had nearly disposed of the first cup, things went on better. They took up the discourse, turn

and turn about, and each speech was divided into two parts, consisting of remark or narrative, and moral—thus :

“ An execution,” said the hop-merchant, “ is an awful sight. To see fellow-creatures in perfect health one moment, and the next to see them dead corpses—(Here he paused, to give due importance to so grand a sentence,)—is a spectacle which makes one shudder.

MORAL.

“ But such scenes, though sad, are necessary, as a warning to innocence, and a terror to guilt.”

“ Certainly,” remarked one of the sheriffs, “ without such examples we could not sleep in our beds.

MORAL.

“ It is to be hoped the execution which has just taken place, will produce a beneficial and a lasting impression.”

Here he looked very significantly at me.

“ Though,” said Dr. Fudge, “ some have contended that man’s blood, ought only to be shed where murder has been committed, yet it must be owned, that in a rich and commercial

state like this, no penalty, short of death, has hitherto been found adequate to repress crime and protect property. Capital punishments are, alas! the only means by which the daring midnight assassin and robber, can be restrained.

MORAL.

“ May the solemn expiation just offered, by the offending sinners, now gone before an unearthly tribunal, produce a proper effect on those hitherto obdurate, and in a great degree unrepentant, and give the being who is yet spared for a season, for a heart of stone, a heart of flesh.”

Dr. Fudge looked at me all the time he was repeating his moral.

The sheriff, Mr. Haversham’s friend, made a short speech to the same effect; but a violent fit of coughing which overtook him, just as he was trying to break out of a long knotty sentence in which he had the misfortune to get entangled, put it out of my power to collect exactly what he said.

The gentleman who had so greatly assisted the ordinary, made a very neat oration on the wisdom of providence, as manifested in the

means, ever presented for the detection of the wicked. He supported his view of the matter, by quoting several texts, which made Dr. Fudge and the ordinary prick up their ears, as if, so it struck me, they thought he was travelling a little out of his own line, to make a sort of inroad upon them.

MORAL.

“ The deeds of darkness will one day be brought to light.”

The under sheriff then gave his speech. I thought it was at least as sensible as that of Dr. Fudge, which, to say truth, did not surprise me ; but the circumstance of its being quite as long, did rather.

The exertions thus made, gave the thing a serious aspect to those who had yet to speak. The ordinary himself considered it no joke. His manor had been poached upon, by some of the gentlemen at the table, and it appeared necessary for his reputation, that he should do something.

He began in a manner which, as it manifested a determination to enlarge on the theme, had

the instant effect of relieving all present, (myself excepted,) from every wish to listen to him. He commenced with the language of the Psalmist, quoted freely from the book of Job, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah, commenting, I thought, with good ability, as he proceeded. He obtained little or no attention. Meanwhile the tea and coffee were not neglected, whatever might be the case with the speech. Even Dr. Fudge, though he had engaged in conversation with the gentleman on his right hand, continued to introduce something to his mouth, for every sentence which issued from that of the ordinary. The moral of the reverend gentleman, I confess, I thought good, though a little interrupted by the vigilant eye which he kept on the breakfast, and the ill-timed offers, to which he had to reply. His concluding reflections, and the answers which he was obliged parenthetically to give, ran thus :

“ Let us then hope that all present, and more especially our unhappy brother, just snatched like a brand from the fire, will derive from these considerations—(*a little more coffee*) the requi-

site firmness and—(*cream, if you please,*) resignation, to carry him through—(*the liver wing, if you can spare it,*) those trials which await us in this life; and may we find, in the last moments of our existence—(*no more tongue,*) that consolation within ourselves, which is of all the most sweet—(*there is too much sugar,*) and which may truly be called the *bread of life.*”

He took up a *French roll*, and began to butter it as he finished.

It was the hop-merchant whom Dr. Fudge had engaged in conversation. Part of the time I was induced to listen to them, more than to the ordinary. I had no doubt that they were speaking of the execution, as I distinctly heard mention made of their *going up*, and of its being almost time for them to *come down*.

And so it struck one of the sheriffs; for when, at length, the ordinary had finished, he remarked to Dr. Fudge, “Why yes, doctor, as you say, it is nearly time.”

“For what?” inquired Dr. Fudge.

“For the men to be cut down.”

“Oh, oh, oh!” simpered the doctor; “the

worthy sheriff has misconceived. We were talking, not of the culprits, but of the state of the hop-market, where my friend on the right, looking at the present state of the bind in the outstanding crops, is confident we may expect, that the prices will immediately fall."

This droll mistake, as the company were now, from the influence of a good breakfast, pretty well disposed to turn "from grave to gay," produced a general expression of mirth, which was greatly heightened by the facetious doctor, who added,

" We talk'd not of the drop,
But of the hop."

Which entertaining bit of metre, he gave with such excellent emphasis, that none of its smartness was lost, even on me.

The conversation became general, lively, and excursive. I cannot recollect half the good things that were said; though two of the Doctor's *bon mots* were voted so excessively brilliant, that it was impossible to forget them. Thus it was that they were produced.

The hop-merchant, having remarked, that he perceived a part of the cookery of the prison,

was done near the debtors' door, (alluding to the copper, which I before mentioned,) Dr. Fudge said, the situation of it was remarkably convenient, as some of the prisoners of necessity went that way, "*to get their gruel.*"

This well-timed joke on hanging, told amazingly well; and when the under sheriff remarked, that comparatively but few went there, the doctor came in again with,

"True, only the great men—only those who *get to the top of the tree.*"

I cannot describe the roar of applause, which followed this merry conceit. All, save, indeed, Mr. Haversham and myself, enjoyed it wonderfully.

The mirth which prevailed, was interrupted by the appearance of one of the marshal's men, who announced that the chimes had gone a quarter past nine. His entrance was the signal for an adjournment. Some of the party went to see the remains of my late companions re-enter the prison, the sheriffs having intimated, that it was now time, to remove the dead men, and take away the breakfast things.

CHAPTER II.

Notwithstanding my late good fortune, I am very wretched—

I leave the prison, sail for New South Wales, and reach my destination in safety—Am landed, and set to work with other convicts.

I WAS again locked up, Mr. Haversham having previously taken his departure, in order to apprise Adela of my safety. He had already, even before I knew of the reprieve, sent a note from the prison, to announce to her, that the execution of my sentence would be deferred, at least for a day or two.

It would be deviating from the truth, to say the mercy extended to me, was wholly unacceptable. Great as the evils of life certainly are, and sincerely as they were deplored by me, I still had no wish to escape from them, by the means which lately presented themselves. There are, I know, some brave people, who are always

telling their friends that they do not know what fear is, and have not the slightest dread of death; but I could hardly venture on proclaiming myself one of them, as I really had, so long as my life was in danger, a “pretty considerable” objection to dying.

But notwithstanding this, when the dread of sudden extinction had passed away, I was far from revelling in that glow of rapturous exultation, which some of my friends, expected would grow on the non-dislocation of my neck. I reflected with anguish, that if my life had been mercifully spared, my character had not been vindicated; and though the last punishment was not to be inflicted, yet banishment from my native land for life, and an eternal separation from Adela, were my doom—a doom I thought sufficiently severe.

In vain did Mr. Haversham exert himself to obtain a further extension of mercy. It was thought that all that could be done under the circumstances, had already been conceded; and he was at length constrained to abandon the attempt to obtain my pardon, in despair.

His next care was, to endeavour to save me from the misery of passing many weeks on board the hulks, before the sailing of the ship, which was to take me to New South Wales. From the horrid accounts which he had heard, of those dens of wretchedness and crime, he was extremely anxious on this head. Here he was successful. I was permitted to remain in prison, till a vessel was on the point of sailing for New South Wales.

My escape from death, caused me to experience a repetition of those tender farewell scenes, which, when once over, I had lately flattered myself, were over for ever. I will not repeat the string of admonitions which I received from my uncle Peter, my aunt Maxwell, Mr. Mason, and my mother. Suffice it to say, those tender relations were as good as formerly, and their prayers and instructions, produced as great an impression on me, as ever they had done.

The day approached when I was to commence my miserable journey. Adela once more deigned to visit the prison. She wept at the idea of bidding a long and last adieu; but she failed

not to express, with unaffected fervour, her gratitude to the Almighty, that on this occasion she could leave me without the miserable reflection which had before weighed down her spirits, that in a few hours after her departure, I must be numbered with the dead.

“ You are kind, Adela,” I replied, and “ from my heart I thank you ; but, at present, you overrate the good fortune on which you think I may not improperly be congratulated. True it is, that I am not yet dismissed from existence ; but when that is said, all is said that can be affirmed on the subject of my improved condition. I am sentenced to be exiled from England, and from you, and that too, for ever.”

“ But your life is spared ; and you may yet hope that time will do you justice, and vindicate your fame.”

“ True Adela, I am permitted to survive, but surely, whatever gratitude is due to the kind friend whose painful and long continued exertions obtained this boon, you must see, that to exist, as I must from henceforth, is but to suffer.”

“ I hope not. Fondly I still cling to the expectation that circumstances will hereafter bring the truth to light, and restore you to those friends from whom you are to part.”

“ I cannot share this expectation.”

“ But,” said Adela, “ supposing the worst—supposing that the clearing up of your character shall never be effected, hard as your lot would be in that case, I would still persuade myself, that in another hemisphere you may know comforts, which, if they cannot console you for the loss of all your English connections, will still make life less irksome, than you conceive it must necessarily prove.”

“ I cannot boast of being so well prepared to quit life, as to feel regret that the awful forfeit has not been exacted, but yet to me, existence is comparatively of small value. To be at liberty, respected and beloved by our friends, is enjoyment, and thus circumstanced, we may rationally prize life. But when we must endure miserable restraint, in short, when life is so deteriorated, that it becomes but the consciousness of shame and pain, I hardly know that

friendship ought not to condole with him, whose days are prolonged on such hard—on such galling conditions, instead of rejoicing, that he is still in pain.”

“ Nay,” said Mr. Haversham, “ you must remember, that it is the lot of man to endure, and bear your fate with resolution,

‘ Each has his pang, but feebler sufferers groan,’ and trust me, many of those who to the casual observer seem rich in happiness, would be found, could you look into their hearts and mark the conflicting feelings there engaged, wretched in the extreme.”

“ You,” said Adela, “ have at least the consolation of being free from self-reproach.”

“ Would to God that it were so,” I replied. “ Never, till the end of my melancholy career, can I acquit myself of the base injustice which led me first to suspect, and then, to fly from my friends. Though not guilty of that which has been laid to my charge, the moral turpitude of my conduct is such, that no punishment can be too severe.”

“ Of this no more,” said my friend. “ Endeavour to calm your spirits, and hope for happier days. Yet be prepared for sorrow. The gay hopes of life’s vernal day, are glittering cheats. They proffer scenes of unalloyed delight. Wreathed roses, fragrant zephyrs, and all the witchery of nature’s minstrelsy, deck the gaily imagined bower, and sport round the blissful home, which is to be ours in future. But the flowers fade, the clouds lower, and the thunder roars, or more awful silence and despondency, terminate the brief vision, and wake us to real wretchedness.”

I assented with a sigh.

“ Knowing this,” he resumed, “ during rigorous adversity, remember, that in this imperfect state of being, happiness is not for man, and be consoled by the knowledge, that if his sufferings for the moment, are indeed acute, they must of necessity be short.”

Adela, assured me, that I should ever be tenderly remembered by her. This kindness, made me feel but the more acutely, the misery of my situation. I will not describe the greedy

earnestness with which I gazed on her, and the intolerable anguish which grew on the appalling reflection, that I did so for the last time, and when our final adieux were exchanged, no words can image the sickening horror, with which the objects which then successively presented themselves to my view, were beheld.

Nothing more disgusted me, than the jollity, real or affected, of the wretches in the ward to which, after my reprieve, I had been returned, and who were about to be embarked with me for New South Wales. They were accustomed to make it their boast that they had long since “*weighed their weight*,” that is, had committed some capital crime, to which they had ascended by regular gradations, from the *area sneak*,—robbing the areas of houses; and the *kid rig*,—imposing on boys entrusted with parcels, braving every variety of punishment, from the *stoop*, to the *scragging post*, as these demons, with an air of mirthful waggery, were accustomed to designate the pillory and the gallows.

To be mixed up with such society, was a punishment sufficiently great for an offence of

ordinary magnitude, but the infliction was not a little heightened, by the circumstance of my finding myself, alternately, the object of their compassion and applause.

Some of them would annoy me, by telling me that I ought to keep up my spirits, and that I might be glad to go over the herring-pond, as to be *lagged* was a joke, but it was a serious affair to be *twisted*.

Let me hasten to close this scene. Under a strong escort, I and about thirty others, were conveyed in an open caravan to Blackfriar's Bridge. As we left the prison, some of my fellow travellers bade "the *Stone Jug*" good bye, and set up a shout as we passed down the Old Bailey. Others called out to their friends, who were waiting to see them, to write to them, and some few who like me were dejected, were abused by their fellows for showing so little *pluck*.

We were put on board a lighter at Blackfriar's Bridge, in which we were conveyed to Gravesend. There we were received by the Kangaroo, which was to carry us to our ulti-

mate destination. On entering the vessel, we were severally saluted with two or three buckets of water, discharged full in our faces. Some slop clothing was then given to us, which we were obliged to put on immediately. What we had previously worn, was taken from us, and thrown overboard.

A few days brought us to Spithead. We were ironed I should mention, and kept between decks, while on the way. Several reinforcements of convicts, were furnished from different parts of the country. We remained a few days off the place last named, and then set sail.

Truly sad were those moments. I recalled the different circumstances under which I had formerly quitted England, and the comparison was any thing but soothing to my spirits.

As the waves dashed against the advancing ship, I fancied they sighed responsive to the grief which burst from my oppressed bosom. My fellow-convicts were nearly as wretched as myself. Their former gaiety had vanished. Many of them had never been at sea before, and they were consequently indisposed from the

motion of the vessel. Though there was not the slightest danger, when the ship pitched, they gave themselves up for lost, and alternate execrations and prayers, were prompted by their sufferings and their fears.

My reflections were of the most painful description. The mental torture to which I was doomed, it would be difficult to paint. Self-reproach, was the most predominant feeling. I very sincerely felt, that to be moderately at his ease, a man must think favourably of his own conduct.

I ought to mention, that owing to the exertions of Mr. Haversham, and the recommendation which I received through his means to the captain, I was soon relieved from my irons, and allowed to be the greater part of the day on deck. At Rio Janeiro, where the ship made a stay of three weeks, I was even permitted to go on shore. In fine, I had nothing to complain of, with respect to the treatment I received on the voyage. Had the other convicts known my exact situation, I should have been to them an object of envy, for besides

several letters which I carried out, and which were likely to be of considerable service to me when we reached our destination, in the farewell letters of Mr. Haversham and Adela, received off Portsmouth, besides other valuable marks of their unabated regard, I found a bank note for five hundred pounds.

With such means at my command, had my mind been such as it once was, I might reasonably have hoped to fare better than nine-tenths of those who were my companions. But this never occurred to me. I indeed had no thought of attempting to push my fortune in the colony. All my ideas were fixed on England, and Adela, and withdrawn from these, as I was, I cared for nothing else. I looked but for misery wherever I might go, and when at length my companions shouted with joy, on learning that we were about to enter Sydney Cove, I experienced no pleasurable sensation on that account. "It is my doom," thought I, "never to quit the land which I now approach, and such being the case, I care not how soon it affords me a grave."

The day after we anchored in Sydney Cove, the governor's secretary, and the superintendent of convicts, came on board, to inspect the new comers, and we were all mustered on the quarter deck. Our supplies had been sparingly issued during the last three weeks, and in consequence of this, many of my companions, who declared they were not coming to Botany Bay to be starved, had threatened to make a complaint on the subject, the moment they had the opportunity of doing so. That moment had now arrived, as each was asked in turn, how he had been treated on the voyage, whether he had received his full rations, and whether he had any complaint to make against the captain or the crew. The former however, when we were about to see land, had become most conciliatory in his manner. Those on whom he had previously bestowed the most unmeasured abuse, accompanied by furious menaces, were treated with great tenderness, and finally, small presents of money, amounting in the whole, perhaps, to about half the price of the provisions saved by his parsimony, together

with a promise of speaking a good word for them at “The Bay,” had subdued all resentment, and they positively declared that they had never been put on short allowance, and never received the slightest offence from any one on board.

We were then measured, and the height and description of each, entered in a book kept for that purpose. The next inquiry was as to our former trades and callings, and here from the peculiar circumstances of my life, I was a good deal puzzled how to answer. I was about to explain, that it had been my lot to be brought up in part by a father-in-law, who had taught me no profession, and was then about to hint at the occupations I had followed, when the superintendant interrupted me with,

“Cut it short, we don’t want any of your *gab*. You are not at the Old Bailey now.”

I said, “I only wished to explain to him the difficulty I felt in giving him a direct answer.”

“We don’t want explanations,” he replied, “what’s your trade?”

“ O he’s a lawyer,” cried one of the jail-birds, near me.

“ A sawyer—very well—that is an answer.”

And I was entered accordingly as a sawyer.

I observed a convict whisper to one of those who had come on board with the superintendent, and who was an overseer. This person had been formerly transported, and was well known to my companions. After the communication made to him, which I have mentioned, he spoke to the superintendent.

What he said, I could not hear, except the two or three last words—“ he was quite a swell;” which from the looks of the overseer, as well as the superintendent, I was quite sure related to me.

“ No matter,” the superintendent replied, “ that will do well enough,” and he winked to the overseer.

The next day but one we were landed, and marched into the yard of the gaol. Here we were drawn up in two lines for the inspection of the governor, who addressed to us a formal oration, exhorting us to become new men, that

we might recover in that land, the station we had forfeited in our own.

“Is the old *cove* going to tip us a sermon?” was murmured among us, and other speeches in the same strain, were uttered by way of comment, on the governor’s speech.

The destinations of most of us were then fixed. Some were sent off to Paramatta, others to Windsor. Those who had been accustomed to agricultural labour, were ordered to Grose Farm, Longbottom and Emu Plains.

I soon learned that it had been determined that I should remain at Sydney, and felt not a little surprised, at finding that I was appointed to work with “a gang” of sawyers, with whom I was accordingly lodged at the convict barrack in Hyde Park.

It was in vain I declared that I had never known the sawyer’s calling. The answer which I received was, that “if that were the case, I must know it now.” I attempted to do as I was directed, but with very ill success. My awkwardness however was made my reproach, and I was told it was of no use, as I should find

such tricks would not do there. My distress I had before thought scarcely capable of being aggravated, but I found the addition of bodily pain, though on such a subject I should recently have professed the greatest indifference, was no trifling ingredient in the cup of misery.

CHAPTER III.

I find myself extremely miserable, and am generally despised, but at length find a friend—Paternal anxiety displayed—I get relieved from labour, and begin to mix with New South Wales society.

My situation, was infinitely worse than I had conceived it could by possibility be rendered. Among all the wretches to whose association I was doomed, I saw no one so lonely, so miserable as myself.

The free settlers looked on me, as they would on any other convict. If any thing about me had for a moment attracted their notice, they would only have considered me a remarkable thief, and have acted accordingly.

The miscreants who had been transported with me, were much better off. They were soon recognised by their old friends, who told them the ways of the place, and merrily talked

over the burglaries and other outrages, in which they had been companions, in the days which were gone.

The social glow, which these conversations produced, moved my envy, and made me feel more acutely than ever, the misfortune of being innocent. Though it was my fate to be "*lagged*," as their phrase was, I could not boast of having been concerned in any noted criminal enterprise. When they talked of Bridewell, and of the tread-mill, I had nothing to say. I could not even recommend myself to their attention, by telling of my having received a whipping at the cart's tail. With none of the runners at the public offices had I been on terms of friendly intimacy, as all of them had. I did not even know their names, and it was equally out of my power to interest my companions, by recounting anecdotes or sayings of any hero of the profession, who had been hanged.

They considered me a sort of an intruder, who had no business there. They called me a *spooney*, passed off all sorts of coarsely offen-

sive jests upon me, and if I attempted speech to expostulate with them or otherwise, I was promptly told that I might shut my *oven*, save my *bellows* to blow my porridge, and give my *red rag* a holiday.

There was however one convict, whose situation somewhat resembled mine. He had been three years in the colony, and like me, he was constantly the butt of his fellows. Instead however of enduring it with sullen disdain, or silent sorrow, as I did, he generally returned their abuse with interest.

This fellow's face was of a most cadaverous hue. It was perfectly free from flesh; and the wink and scowl, which were in constant requisition with him, had surrounded his sharp badger-like eyes with wrinkles. His spare form and nimble gesticulation, caused him to be incessantly likened to a baboon; and the grin on his ghastly visage, whether produced by merriment or rage, certainly threw no disgrace on the comparison. The jail-birds, his old companions, had bestowed on him a score of nicknames; but that by which he was generally

known, was one which applied to his mental worth, as well as to his personal merit—it was *Lean Iniquity*.

And really, if the old moralities were to be revived on the modern stage, and I were manager of one of the theatres, I do not know any thing on which I should felicitate myself so much, as the circumstance of my having it in my power to produce so fine, so perfect a living picture of Sin, as was furnished in the person of Lean Iniquity.

Such was my feeling, from the moment in which I first saw him; yet from this wretch, persecuted as I was, the language of civility was not unacceptable to my ear. To be sure, he was somewhat recommended to me, by the hatred of those, who were most disposed to make themselves my enemies.

And he, while they were persecuting me with their vulgar insolence, thought proper to address me in a tone which had something of courtesy in it. He gave me counsel, which, perhaps, would not have proved bad, if I had cared to act upon it. He advised me, not to remain passive,

but to return the abuse I received ; and to tell those from whom it came, that though the herring-pond divided them from the Old Bailey, in which their *rags ought to have been aired*, yet for all that they need not chuckle so much, as it had only brought them from one gallows, to swing on another.

“ These scamps,” said he, “ are a mob of riff-raff, who never had any thing to lose but their *wind*. Their *scraggs* were their whole and sole capital. What does it signify, what such a set of rips may say of their superiors—of men of education and of genius, like you and myself?”

The hatred and scorn which he manifested for our companions, I most cordially subscribed to ; and I did not quarrel with the compliment which he had paid to me. He proceeded to set up his own consequence, by telling me that it was a bore to be there ; for when once he was out of his time, he had a good home to go to, and every thing would at last be prime and *plummy*, and he should hold up his head as high as if nothing had happened.

“ You mean,” said I, “ you expect to be able to get a decent livelihood in England, I suppose ?”

“ O ! as to that,” he answered, “ about getting a livelihood, that’s all my eye and Betty Martin. The fact is, my work is done already. My old father has played the trick so well, that I shall be a gentleman, and have plenty to spend and nothing to do, even if he don’t *sell out*.”

“ Sell out !” I repeated. The phrase came suddenly to my ear, like an old acquaintance whom I had had no expectation of meeting with in New South Wales. I supposed he meant, that he should have money, without troubling his father to sell his consols ; and I gave him to understand that this was my idea.

“ No,” said Lean Iniquity, “ that is not the *selling out* to which I allude. I mean to say, I shall do very well if the old fellow don’t *kick the bucket* ; but as he is pretty well up in years,— that is, not a little *stale*, I may hope that he’ll put on his *wooden Benjamin*, and go to the devil before he’s much older.”

The brutal merriment with which this wretch expressed a hope that his father would speedily

enrich him by dying, filled me with horror which I could ill dissemble. I however stifled, as well as I could, the expression of my abhorrence, for I did not wish to be thought ridiculous; and Lean Iniquity proceeded.

“ The old screw, by what I can learn, is diddling the flats pretty well. He is one of the cleverest thieves alive. Dead swindling, has been his trade these thirty years, yet he never comes within the clutches of the law. He robs legally. By hook or by crook, he got hold of some land which he never paid for, but which is, nevertheless, securely his. Then he got hold of a squad of poor fools, who had scraped up about a hundred and fifty pounds each, to begin to build houses on this land. He lent them a trifle to help them on, but made them pay thirty per cent. interest, in the shape of a heavy ground-rent. He would not, however, let them have enough to finish what they had begun, and, at last, he seized on the unfinished erections for his arrears, and sent the whole kit to the workhouse.”

I felt disgust, and expressed astonishment at what I heard.

“A devilish good trick, wasn’t it?” Lean Iniquity went on. “Well, now, he writes to me, that he has got hold of some concern, which he hopes to *do* the present proprietors out of, in a year or two, as he is most carefully cultivating their friendship for that purpose.”

“To possess himself of their property?”

“To be sure. He is as patient as Job. He will fawn and pretend affection for seven years, and then, when he sees his opportunity, he could strip his friend stark naked, or cut his throat, without pity or remorse, immediately after dining at his table.”

“This seems incredible,” I remarked.

“All true, upon my honour,” said Lean Iniquity, placing his hand upon his heart, and looking as if he expected this solemnity would dispel all scepticism. “My father,” he went on, “is a very extraordinary man,—a man of vastly superior mind. Here is a bit of one of the old rascal’s letters.”

With these words, he put into my hand half a sheet of paper, and I read as follows :

“ MY DEER HENNEYRI,

“ Has I tolld you in my larst, I have bort a share in Smith and Hopkinson’s printing concern, and have so far outwitted the other properioters, as to get jest twise has mutch has I were to have had, bye the artercles off agremont. Now as this his a clarsercal consarn, I wish you to pay attention to your eddication, which you know I tooke grate care of in Ingland, so as wen you cum back, we can manedge it betwene us, and throw all the others over the brige, witch will be makin a fortin ; and as they, after being *maced*, as I tolld you at first, have lefft all the accounts in my hand, and considder mee there best frend, I can do jest as I like ; so I considder the wholl propperty as alreddy my hone, which, on ackount of the classercal nature of it, is the more sooted to my taste.”

The paper was torn so, that I could not continue the reading of this fine epistle ; but on the other side I noticed a very pithy addition. It was simply this :

“ P.S. Youre mother is ded abowt a fortnite sinse.”

“ A pretty hand, isn’t it ? ” said Lean Iniquity, “ that is, for marking sheep. The old rogue leans all his letters the wrong way on purpose, when he writes a letter like this.”

“ Why a letter like that ? ”

“ Don’t you see that it lets the cat out of the bag, and would play the very devil if it got into improper hands ? My father, being quite aware of that, disguises his writing, that he may be able, in case of need, to swear it’s a forgery.”

I found, from subsequent conversations, that Lean Iniquity had been transported for robbing a jeweller’s errand-boy of property belonging to his employer. He, however, boasted that he had been in the horse-chaunting line. He indeed reckoned himself a good hand at horse-flesh ; and had scarcely been surpassed at *kid-peeling*, as he called it, meaning, stripping children, and robbing them of their clothes. He praised his own industry highly ; and declared, that he would rather rob a baby of its bread and butter, than suffer his hand to get out of practice, so long as he had occasion for “ *an easy guinea.* ” He described himself to

have been concerned in several burglaries, in one of which a murder had been committed. A doubt, I ought to add, was thrown on this statement by some who heard it; and it was truly remarked by one of our fellows, that “men would make their brags, where they could not be contradicted.”

Lean Iniquity, had at first been a member of one of the gangs kept at work in Sydney; but I soon saw him relieved from regular work, and he appeared at large. As I was not in the habit of conversing with any other person, I did not know how this was effected, till he, having first enjoined me to observe the strictest secrecy, told me that it was managed by getting himself hired by a free settler, who then, in consideration of receiving fifteen shillings a-week from him, allowed him to go where he pleased. He offered, very kindly, as I thought, to obtain the like privilege for me, on the same terms.

Though from mental anguish, I had at first looked with indifference on labour, however severe, my bleeding hands and aching limbs, had often made me wish I could be spared some

of these annoyances, which, though nobly disdained by heroes and heroines of romance, as vastly beneath notice, are still really troublesome to common-place people in real life ; and I was, therefore, well content to authorise Lean Iniquity, to effect the arrangement, which he had suggested.

But just at this time, the overseer, whom I on my arrival had seen whispering to the superintendent, made me an offer of the same kind, differing only in this, that he undertook to effect my release from labour for ten shillings, while my friend named no less a sum than fifteen. I was not, now, so green, but I knew that, in most parts of the world, more is exacted in some shape or other, for any given service performed in the way of favour by a friend, than any stranger would require as full and sufficient payment ; but yet I had not expected that in this instance, Lean Iniquity would seek to add fifty per cent. to the sum, which it was necessary should be forthcoming, to emancipate me from the sawyers' working gang.

He seemed a little hurt, when I told him of

the offer I had had made to me ; and talked a good deal of the exertions he had made to serve me, and moreover of the negociation being now so advanced, that he did not see how it could go off. This almost provoked me to laugh ; for as it depended upon me, whether or not the money stipulated to be paid, should be produced, I was satisfied that, unless I furnished the cash, he would not be able to see, how the business could go on.

The overseer having thus reduced the expense to me one-third, I requited him for affording me this benefit, by suggesting to him, though before I had not thought fifteen shillings a week too much, that I was clearly of opinion less than ten might be sufficient. No reduction, however, he said, could be made ; and he explained to me, that out of the ten shillings which he was to receive from me, five would go to the superintendant.

This, I afterwards found, was really the fact, and that it was in the anticipation that I should subscribe to such a bargain, as the one then about to be concluded, that the superintendant,

understanding I was not without money, had kept me in Sydney, and added me to the sawyers' gang.

In Sydney, on the rocky ground opposite Bennelong's point, on which the Government House is established, there are a number of dirty streets, which, from their vicinity to the King's Wharf, are generally peopled with sailors, and all the disorderlies which usually abound where mariners find a temporary home. Low public-houses, and brothels, are by no means scarce in this part of the town ; and the whole neighbourhood, the St. Giles's, or rather the St. Katherine's of that quarter, is known by the name of "The Rocks."

These streets, had formerly titles sufficiently striking to make them remembered ; yet no writer has hitherto thought it necessary to give a list of them. As I am not writing a history of the colony, it is not my place to furnish one ; but I may state, *en passant*, that Governor Macquarry, when he came to New South Wales, judged it right to order for them a new set of names, and caused them to exchange the dis-

tinctions, which had previously belonged to them, for those of royalty. A good deal of elegance was introduced, to the exclusion of the ungenteel addresses, which the inhabitants of “The Rocks” had till then put up with. Thus, it may be mentioned, by way of specimen, *Bladder Row* became *Cambridge Street*; and the other *Rows* were, in like manner, dignified with appellations, borrowed from the honours borne, by the various members of the family of his late majesty.

Some two or three times, I had suffered Lean Iniquity to take me to a public-house at “The Rocks,” where, though the recreations commonly witnessed in that place, were of the lowest description, and therefore suitable to the company, I had been content to rest, for a few hours, when I was not required to be at the barrack.

But the tumults, which were of frequent occurrence, more than once drove me away, and made me resolve to return no more. Lean Iniquity, however, who was very persevering in his attentions, continued, on all such occasions,

to wheedle me back, and I must confess that, in some instances, I was rather amused, with the proceedings of the strangely-grouped wretchedness there exhibited.

Females uniformly made part of the company ; but I cannot say that the society of the place, was much improved, even in appearance, by that circumstance. The ladies who assembled at "The Rocks," were among the most hideous objects in creation. To explain this, may not be improper. The very unpromising aspect which they wore, was in part owing to the circumstance of there being no means provided by government, for the return of those who had served out that period of exile, to which they had been sentenced. The consequence was, those only could find their way back to England, who had sufficient attraction, to gain the favour of some commander of a vessel, or other officer, possessed of sufficient influence to procure a passage for a female companion. The old and the ugly, unable to obtain such patronage, were compelled to stay in the colony.

One woman came to Cambridge Street, who,

from the scarcity of females in general, and of female loveliness in particular, was something like a reigning toast at “The Rocks.” Her features were large and vulgar ; she was what would have been called plain in England ; but here, in the class to which she belonged, she was almost considered a beauty.

That she mistook herself for one, was clear from all her actions ; and it was equally evident that she believed herself to be prodigiously accomplished. She also gave out, that she was a person of vast information ; and boasted of having read a circulating library completely through. This might be true, for she certainly knew a great many novels and romances by name. She sometimes addressed her conversation to me ; and, when compared with the calamitous ignorance of the other ladies, whom I was in the habit of meeting, such conversation was really a treat. An oath would sometimes pop out from her lips, but only now and then ; and she seldom smoked. To these evidences of superior refinement, I may add, that though she was familiarly called by the male convicts, Fan

Dabsley, she had been transported under the name of Jacquiline Delville, which she assured me, and that too "upon her soul and body," was really her own.

GEORGE GODFREY.

CHAPTER IV.

I again feel the influence of female attractions—Am claimed in a very extraordinary way by a lady—A ticket of leave is obtained for me—I find myself yoked to a sublimely romantic companion, and try to make the best of a bad bargain, but find that there is no making a silk purse of a sow's ear.

THERE is something in female society, most soothing to the heart of man. Such was the reflection which I made, when I found any thing like comfort stealing over me, while listening to such a specimen of the sex as Fan Dabsley, which I now did rather frequently, at *Cambridge Street*.

Perhaps this will seem the less remarkable, when it is remembered, that till I met with her, I had scarcely joined in conversation with any one since my arrival in New South Wales, *Lean Iniquity* excepted. Fan Dabsley, alias *Jacquiline Delville*, had decidedly the advantage over

him in conversation. Though tolerably vulgar, she was not so bad as he was ; and if destitute of real information, she did not display such savage ignorance on all matters not connected with depredation, as he did.

I had met her some dozen or twenty times, perhaps, at “The Rocks,” before the overseer and superintendant had completed the arrangement, which was to transfer ten shillings a-week to their pockets from mine.

On the day, when this business was at length settled, Lean Iniquity pretended the most extravagant delight at finding it done on such favourable terms. He said he was glad the “extortioning rascal,” who had wanted fifteen shillings, had been foiled ; and, in the fulness of his heart, he insisted upon it, that I should go to his favourite haunt in Cambridge Street, to stand treat on the occasion.

Thither he took me, and there, as usual, I found Miss Jacquiline Delville. She was warm in her congratulations, and repeatedly shook me by the hand, with an appearance of the most

hearty good will. Her cordiality made considerable impression on me, and I was at a loss how to requite her kindness. We drank together more than once; and as the evening came on, our friendly greetings becoming even warmer than before, I at length (forgive me, love and Adela!) did what I little thought of doing—I kissed her.

Before this occurred, let me remark, though I know it is but an Old Bailey defence, Lean Iniquity had pleyed me very diligently with liquor; and such was the effect of what I swallowed, unused as I was to “drink deep,” that shortly after what I have mentioned, I fell from my chair in a state of total insensibility.

From my own recollection, I cannot speak with any tolerable degree of certainty, to what occurred in the course of the next six and thirty hours. When at length I became perfectly myself, I was in bed, and perceived that I was not alone.

“Who’s there?” I demanded with infinite astonishment.

“ Why me, to be sure,” replied a voice, which I at once recognised as that of Fan Dabsley; “ don’t you know your own wife?”

“ *My* wife!” I exclaimed; and I bounced out of bed, as my amiable companion was afterwards accustomed to describe it, “ like a parched pea, out of a fire-shovel.”

“ Yes, your wife,” she replied. “ What, do you pretend to forget that you have married me? That’s a good one, however.”

I hastily dressed myself, and ran down stairs, followed by the lady who claimed me as her husband. Here I found Lean Iniquity, with several of his friends, who all wished me joy.

At first I considered them to be joking, and expressed disgust at such merriment, which, though not unusual at “ The Rocks,” where I still found myself, had never been to my taste. They, however, hastened to assure me that they were all serious, and that I had really entered the holy state, which was confirmed by the most solemn asseverations of the lady.

I denied it, and stormed at the insolence and folly, of attempting to play upon me in that

manner, and exhibited a good deal of passion, to the infinite entertainment of the company.

Lean Iniquity at length took me aside, and having expressed great concern, at seeing me so much affected, he “advised me as a friend, not to go on, as I had been going on, as that would only make bad worse.” He proceeded to say, that, “I had been so mad for marrying on the preceding day, that nothing he could urge, had the slightest effect on me, or the thing would never have taken place. However, he added, matters might have been worse, for my wife was considered to be a fine woman, and had moreover a perfectly unblemished character.”

I ought before to have remarked, that if beauty and accomplishments, were not judged exactly by the same standard in Sydney, as they are in England, the same might be said of virtue. My wife, as she was now to be called, had not made as yet any addition to the natives, and consequently she was as proud of her reputation, as she was of her personal charms, and extensive reading.

But high as she might stand in her own esti-

mation, and well content as I might have been at times, to find myself in her company, I, certainly, had never been conscious of the least disposition to aspire to her hand. All this, I now told my friend, Lean Iniquity, adding, that “ I would rather die than marry her.”

He answered, that “ what was done could not be undone, so it was of no use talking.”

“ But,” said I, “ I know nothing at all of the matter.”

To which he replied with a grin,

“ Well, and what of that? Very few people even on t’other side of the water, when marrying, *know what they are about.*”

This pleasantry, on his part, did not amuse me so much as he expected it would, and I solemnly declared, “ that I could not believe it was possible for me to have been legally married, for in the first place, as he knew very well, the consent of the chaplain was necessary, and next, the banns must be published, the same as in England.”

He admitted this to be true, but told me “ all that was necessary had been done. Applica-

tion for the chaplain's consent, had been made in proper form. It had been granted, and the banns had been regularly published."

I judged that to be impossible, for as the convicts were regularly mustered every Sunday morning, and marched to church, and as I had never missed going by any chance, it appeared to me that if published, I must have heard my own name, or rather that which I had borrowed, called over.

Lean Iniquity replied, that he should have thought so too. He however had so heard it called over, and remembered that I had appeared thoughtful at the time, and not at all attentive to what was going on. I admitted that the publication of banns, was a ceremony in which I took no interest, and while it was taking place, my thoughts were likely to wander.

I was however still so incredulous, that it was not till he had taken me to St. James's church, and showed what purported to be my signature in the book, there kept, that I could believe I had really been married. This at last convinced me, that by a regularly concerted

scheme, I had been tricked into a marriage, which certainly I never had previously contemplated for a single moment.

It is not worth while to record the indignant reproaches, which I bestowed on Fan Dabsley, alias Jacquolina Delville, or as I must in future call her, my wife, or the boisterous insolence, with which they were answered. I may however remark, that they proved very entertaining to those who witnessed what passed between us, and we were so accommodating as frequently to renew them, for the gratification of all bystanders.

My first resolution, was never to live with her, but it was her determination, to follow me like my shadow. To the lodging which I had taken in Sydney, she directed her steps without loss of time. There she insisted on remaining, so long as I made it my place of residence, and I had no means of expelling her from it.

Lean Iniquity, seemed really anxious to console, and to serve me. He frequently descanted on the many good qualities of Mrs. Bainbridge, and besides this, he told me, a *ticket of leave*

could now be obtained for me, which would save the ten shillings I had engaged to pay weekly to the overseer. And he actually procured one, which I thought remarkably kind of him.

My wife was talked of in Sydney, as possessing some extraordinary attractions, but had she been in London, she might have taken a leisurely walk from Knightsbridge Barracks, to Mile End Turnpike, without provoking one rudely wishful glance by the way. Her complexion had been tolerably good, but it was faded. Her eyes, which were once expressive, were no longer insufferably bright, and a lengthened career of fraud, had given her a leer, which was too indicative of her real character, to be endurable. Her nose was large, and gave a masculine expression to her whole countenance, and her lips, which were none of the reddest, nor of the thinnest, carried a superfluity of down, which it was difficult to look upon, without feeling great reverence for the man who first invented razors. The texture of her skin was coarse, her limbs would have been

praised in a coal porter, and her hand ruddy as ever her cheek could have been in her youthful days, would only have looked rather small, if placed by the knuckle of an ox.

But Jacquolina had a great taste for the sentimental. She had selected a fine assortment of melo-dramatic attitudes, which she generally went through once a day, at the same time declaiming against the base world in which she lived, and hoping the day was not very remote when she should be "*no more.*" *No more*, was the expression Jacquolina always preferred. She would have thought it ungenteel, or at least common-place, to say dead.

With such a person, and such acquirements as she possessed, her attempts to be fine were ridiculous enough. Had there been any room in my heart for mirth, I should have laughed heartily, when I saw her common-place and uninteresting features, reclining on her hand, and her lack lustre eyes raised to heaven. The exhibition was the more striking, as she was generally thus sublime, with a dirty face, for I ought before to have mentioned, Jacquolina

shrunk from the application of water to her flesh, so much, that I sometimes suspected (with infinite concern of course), that she was likely to fall a victim to the hydrophobia.

But the worst of it was, she would start in an instant from one of her finest reveries, to indulge in the language of a London fish-woman, which conduct frequently made me extremely angry. I suppose I was wrong, for she never admitted that she was. Her whole carriage towards me, proved, that she thought, to be perverse was to act with spirit, and boisterous insolence she evidently supposed was dignity.

This ruffled my temper, I showed my resentment, and a pretty cat and dog like life we led of it. The contrast which she furnished to Adela, was ever uppermost in my mind.

I however began to think, that romantic love, though I had long cherished it, ought not to be suffered to interfere in all cases with my present comfort, so as to make every hour of my life, bad worse. Having come to this resolution, I determined to attempt the reformation of my wife, and accordingly I put on a very

conciliating face, and prepared to communicate to her the substance of what was passing in my mind. The dialogue which passed on this occasion, will I think be found to furnish an edifying specimen of what may be effected in a case like mine, and I shall therefore give it verbatim, for the benefit of the reader.

“ I’ll tell you what, *Jac*,” said I, (I thought *Jac* a pretty, and rather elegant abbreviation of *Jacquolina*,) “ between ourselves, it is of no use trying how much we can annoy each other.”

“ Who said it was ?” she inquired, with an air of sulkiness and scorn.

This interrogatory, a little ruffled the tide of my good temper. My tone and manner, I thought, entitled me at any rate to a civil audience. I however swallowed my rising ire, and proceeded.

“ Since we are yoked together, why should we always pull different ways. If we cannot be completely happy, we may as well avoid quarrelling and snarling.”

“ O ! you have found that out, have you !” she exclaimed.

“ Why really,” I went on, “ since things are as they are, I do not see that we can do better than try a little to accommodate ourselves to each other.”

“ Well, and what then?”

“ Why you know we have frequently quarrelled.”

“ Well! suppose we have! Whose fault was that, I should like to know?”

“ If I say what I think, I must tell you, that it was yours.”

“ O to be sure! I think I see myself. I of course am always in fault. Your beautiful temper would never be ruffled but for me. You are telling a pretty tough story, aren’t you?”

“ Well Jac, we won’t bring up old matters now.”

“ Who the devil did bring them up but yourself?”

“ I only wished to see if we could not come to an understanding, that would prove conducive to our future comfort.”

“ Fine talking!”

“ Whether instead of generally wrangling, we could not manage to agree.”

“ Shouldn’t wonder !”

“ Though separated as we are by the mighty ocean from our native land, we may still regulate our conduct by English ideas.”

“ Well, and what’s all this fillaloo about ? What ideas but English ones have I acted upon, that you are kicking up this racket ?”

“ I am making no racket.”

“ Then I don’t know what you call a racket. Haven’t you been preaching to me for the last half hour ?”

“ Preaching !”

“ Yes, preaching. If you’ve got any thing to say, why don’t you turn it out, without all this botheration.”

“ I only wished to point out to you, that we might as well try to be friends.”

“ And why didn’t you say so at once, and stop your clapper.”

“ Nay, I did but speak.”

“ Speak ! well, and what’s the use of your

speaking when you have nothing to say. The chattering of a jackdaw, would be better than your gabble at the best of times."

"It may indeed be so to a capacity like yours," I retorted with a good sample of the sarcastic in my tone and manner, "but," I added, "others may think it worth while, to give me their attention."

"I wish you may get it," Jacquolina answered. "They would be well set to work, to listen to the blarney of an owl-faced, text-mouthing humbug like you, so put that into your pipe and smoke it."

I had borne with considerable fortitude, the sneers at my eloquence, but the attack now made on my person, was more than I could put up with, and I hastily replied,

"That for my part, I thought even an owl-faced humbug like me, did not ask too much, when he called for a little attention from a faded, jaded old bell-wether like her."

"Faded, jaded bell-wether!" repeated Jacquolina Delville, as was, "am I to be *blown up*, sky

high, in this way, by a tawny faced spooney, between a jew and a jackass, like you?"

My wife's energy and volubility together, rather cowed me, and I inwardly reflected, that I had acted foolishly, by saying any thing to aggravate, when it was my object to bring her round to a more affable deportment. I determined at once, if possible, to repair my error.

"Well, well!" said I, "I spoke hastily. I did not exactly mean what I said. You know I'm rather passionate."

"Devil doubt you," replied my consort.

"But think no more about it."

"Think no more about it! and so you are to row me up hill and down dale, all day long, and then, when you please, it's all to be *stashed* in a moment."

"Why, I think it will be better that we should drop it."

"Indeed! shouldn't wonder! you're very good. Yes, you are willing to drop it now, since you find I can answer for myself, and give you as good as you send. You're a fool, so take your change out of that."

“ I never questioned your ability, to answer in a certain way.”

“ What does it signify what you questioned, you stupid baboon !”

I thought it was useless to proceed with my pacific attempts at that time, and prepared to effect my retreat as quietly as I could. I, therefore, only acknowledged her last complimentary speech, by saying, with a forced smile,

“ Have it all your own way.”

“ I will have it all my own way,” she vehemently rejoined, and a new string of abusive epithets fell from that fertile source of vulgar abuse, her tongue. I said little in return, but every word that fell from my lips, was taken up by her, and made the distinct theme of a new obstreperous attack. At length, I resolved, effectually to guard against exasperating her further, not to speak another word, and accordingly, instead of going on with the dialogue, when she next paused, I only ventured on the exclamation “ humph !” But even this roused my wife, as much as the fiercest reproach, and she tauntingly repeated the sound saying,

“ humph again,” and she went on to ask, what did I mean by “ *humph!*” at the same time assuring me, that, since I came to that, she would let me know that she could humph! as well as I could, and now, she added, what did I think of that?

I found that she was more than a match for me, and to escape further reproach, I walked off, leaving her, undoubted mistress of the field, still inveighing against my last most innocent exclamation, and fiercely declaring that she would *humph* me, before she had done with me.

CHAPTER V.

It is proposed to me to escape from the Colony, and my wife—I consent to do so—I receive a letter from England, which brings me important news—My wife attempts self-destruction, and I look on.

“ VISIONS of loveliness, and truth—of happiness, and Adela! which once I dared to cherish, where are ye now, and for what are ye exchanged!”

Those were my sorrowful exclamations, when I found myself alone, while the odious and repulsive being, now called my wife, continued to bounce about the room from which I had fled, indulging in all the virulent abuse, which a mind, fertile of ignominious and reproachful terms, could pour forth.

And then, as to own the truth, I believe that I had caught a touch of the romantic from my wife, I went on to liken my situation to that

of a man, who had seen the sun rise on some delightful morning, diffusing cheerfulness and splendour over the face of creation for a few brief moments, but then set in darkness, while the appalled beholder shrunk from the gathering storm, and mourned the general wreck of nature at hand.

I was in this solemn mood, when Lean Iniquity broke in upon my meditations, and to him, I made no scruple of telling what my feelings were, and what had just occurred.

He professed great sorrow for my unfortunate situation. He said, “ he had thought it probable, that, after a bit, I and my wife would have been able to accommodate our tempers to each other. The evils which I lamented, he agreed were what I pronounced them to be, insupportable. There was, however, one way of escaping from them, and he had before thought of mentioning it to me, but yet he did not know that he was safe in doing so.

When he talked of an escape from my wife, of course I became anxious to hear what he had to say, and so I begged of him to proceed.

“ Why, then,” said he, “ but you have not trusted your wife with your money, have you? Not with the five hundred pounds, that you brought with you?”

I answered “ no,” and that more than four hundred pounds were in the Sydney savings bank, where I had placed it, by the advice of the superintendant, immediately after my arrival.

“ That’s all right,” said he. “ Pretend you are going into some way of business, and draw it all out to-morrow.”

“ But for what purpose?”

“ You shall hear. I and four others have resolved not to be cooped up here any longer. We have got a map of the country; one of my *pals* is an old *bush-ranger*, and will serve us for a guide, and we mean to make a dash into the woods in the first instance, to escape the danger of being *nabbed* again. Then, after a little while, we shall make our way to the coast, and in the course of a few weeks, we shall be sure of hailing some vessel bound for Europe, or for the East Indies, you know it don’t matter much which, and so get off altogether.”

I started some difficulties, touching the practicability of the plan, but these were soon overruled. He said, “he and his companions had considered all that beforehand, and he had no doubt of perfect success.” I certainly had great doubts on the subject. I could not see the way so clearly as he declared that he did, but this, I supposed, might be owing to my imperfect acquaintance with the geography of the place, and I gave up my opposition, and agreed to be one of the party.

This scheme now occupied the whole of my attention, so much so, that I neither noticed the frowns, nor heard the railing of Jacquilina, when I next encountered her. Nay, when these were past, and she began to try her hand at the interesting again, even her dirty-faced tragedy, had no effect on me, and I heard her deep drawn sighs, and the grand exclamation, that “Heaven knew she longed to be removed from this sublunary and terrestrial *spear* of sorrow,” without the slightest emotion.

But I was not equally exempt from agitation, when, just at this period I received a letter from

England, the superscription of which I knew at the first glance, to be in the handwriting of Adela.

The letter was delivered to me in the street. I hastened to my lodgings, to read it, knowing my wife to be from home. She, however, followed close at my heels, and as I afterwards learned, had seen me receive it. I observed her, leering suspiciously at me, but affected to take no notice of it, and watching my opportunity, when she was in the bed-chamber, I locked the door of the other room, (for we had two,) that I might not be interrupted, and read as follows :—

“ The ocean, my dearest friend, which the stern decree of Providence, whose dispensations are mysterious as they are wise, has interposed between us, though it denies us the happiness of conversing together, does not altogether preclude us from communicating our thoughts to each other. Nay, it gives some increased facilities, for my pen can unreservedly express the esteem and love, I bear for him who was to have

been my husband, while addressing one many thousands of miles distant, which, warmly and sincerely as I should feel them, my lips would not dare to utter in his presence.

“ Yet believe me, I painfully contemplate the exile to which you are doomed. How do I pant for an instant answer, to a series of questions I would fain put! I will not ask you what sort of a voyage you had, for that would seem like unkindly assuming, you could have omitted to write on that subject, as soon as the ship reached its destined port; but I would ask, how is your health? Does the climate seem genial, and is your situation tolerable? Fly swift, ye days! Time, accelerate thy course! to give me that consoling intelligence of my lover, which my soul covets!

“ Generous and devoted, as you have ever been, I am sure you would rejoice to learn that I am happy,—not happy, for were it so, I should be destitute of feeling,—but tranquil. Perhaps I ought not to tell you that I have been otherwise, yet there is a me-

lancholy delight, in communicating our sorrows to a beloved fellow-creature, which I cannot deny myself.

“ My kind and noble-hearted father, who knows not of my writing this letter, has been overtaken by misfortune. This could not happen without afflicting me, but besides that pain which a daughter must naturally feel, I have, unhappily, a cause for sorrow, peculiarly my own.

“ You are aware that my parent, though leading the life of a hermit, thought it right to spend a magnificent income, for the benefit of others. Heedless of pecuniary matters, he has long been in the habit of assisting by loans all who applied for them, while negligent of the securities which were proffered, he has forgot in many cases, to observe certain formalities required by law. Of this want of thought, a base advantage has been taken, and, no longer the opulent commoner, to whom every one whose affairs were deranged, might apply with a certainty of relief, he has seen a large portion of

his property wrested from him, and is plunged into great embarrassments himself.

“ Thus circumstanced, he thought of selling the Priory, and on his intention being noised about, a Mr. Chiswell, the same person of whom I have heard you speak, came forward to offer for the purchase. He professed great kindness, and offered at once, to make large advances, in order to spare my father any mortification, which might arise from inability to satisfy on the instant, any demands that could be made on him.

“ For many years, my father has proudly avoided all personal communication with his neighbours—those injurious neighbours, who so readily countenanced the calumnies which malice and ignorance, combined to urge against his sacred honour. From these to experience favour or forbearance, would now, to him, seem worse than death. Mr. Chiswell spared him the necessity of enduring such mortification, and my father, grateful for this attention, deposited with him securities greatly exceeding in value the sums he had furnished.

“ Mr. Chiswell, affecting the most friendly concern, then expressed the deep regret which he should feel at seeing my father make the sacrifice he contemplated. He shed tears, while he spoke. I witnessed his crocodile woe, and, blame me not! for a moment, I suspected that he had not merited the harsh language I once heard you use, when speaking of him. I thought your judgment had been deceived. I could not for a moment suppose, that you had designed to be unjust.

“ Too soon, was I undeceived, for he now—— I have not patience to follow him through the circumlocution which he thought necessary, proposed an alliance between our families, and asked my father to consent that I should marry his son, who is at present in the island of Trinidad, but is soon to return.

“ My father, received this proposition with any thing but the welcome, which the sordid, unfeeling person from whom it emanated, expected it would command. He coldly replied, that on that subject, he could not speak. I was the party most interested; he believed I was

not likely to favour Mr. Chiswell's views ; and unless I did, the business was at an end. To this, the schemer replied, even in my presence, that my father knew best what was proper ; but young ladies, on these occasions, were not always most competent to judge for themselves.

“ The resentment which flashed from my eyes, told him, with what feelings I regarded him, and his offer.

“ He had tact enough to perceive, that it was necessary to win me. I will not go into the particulars of the interviews he sought, and the fawning speeches which he pronounced ; nor do I think it necessary to tell, what answers they received.

“ The moment came, when he thought it wise to alter his deportment. Then it was, that I did justice to your well-remembered description of him. He found that flattery from lips like his, could never persuade, and he scrupled not to threaten. The rage of a demon glared in his harsh visage, while he told me that since I refused my consent, from hostility to him, perhaps I might yet be induced to give it from pity for

my father. He added, with an air of fiend-like triumph, that it rested with him, whether Mr. Haversham should be scorned as a beggar, by those to whom he had for many years opposed contempt and defiance, or maintain his rank in society.

“ To prove this was no idle threat, the villain proceeded to say, that from the opportunities afforded him through the confiding generosity of my father, he had, on inspecting the writings entrusted to him, discovered a defect in Mr. Haversham’s title to the Priory, which, if his resentment were provoked, should speedily pass into other hands.

“ It was in vain that I urged the monstrous crime he would commit, in seeking to take advantage of the generosity which had trusted so largely to his honour. I could not prove, that he had not the power which he said he possessed ; my distress strengthened his resolution, and the threat was barbarously reiterated, that my father should be reduced to beggary, unless I consented to become the wife of this man’s son.

“ I now descended to entreaty, but he was not to be moved. He coldly, but insultingly, replied, that he admired my unyielding firmness so much, that he meant to imitate it.

“ As yet, I have not dared to tell my father what has passed. When I think of doing so, frightful images—I hope they are not presentiments—flit before me. A kind, but proud heart breaking,—a dying father, and the horrid mockery of an exulting miscreant, make me experience shuddering sensations, till now unknown.

“ Sure I am, my father will act no mean, no dishonourable part ; but I tremble for the consequences of that malevolence, of which I am so wretched as to have made him the object.

“ Would to heaven, that you were near, to assist my judgment and regulate my resolution !

“ The wish is vain. What added sorrows I may have to mourn, when the son of Mr. Chiswell returns from Trinidad, I know not ; but this I know, that my love for you can never be shaken. Nor time nor distance, I am certain, can ever wean your heart from me.

“ Shall I tell you a thought that has come over me, and shall I confess that its healing influence, has already mitigated the bitterness of sorrow ? Disgusted with all I see in England, I would fain fly to another hemisphere. Love and Reason, I think the latter, but am sure the former, whisper that what remains of my father’s property, transferred to another country, would furnish all that we could wish of affluence. And O ! were this accomplished, with what ecstacy, should I witness the joy, with which one dear persecuted exile, would see his friends, I mean my father and myself, join him again, to unite their fortunes with his, no more to separate !

“ This thought I will still indulge ; and confident I am, it is one which my father will not seriously disapprove.

“ But alas ! the day in which it can be acted upon is distant. What shall sustain me in the interim, but news from you ? Write to me, and tell me, though I never can doubt it, that I am tenderly remembered, and that no other can call you hers. Tell me that you are not miser-

able. Though dark the cloud that now lowers over us, still let us believe that we shall see bright blissful days again. Be assured, that, I may be unhappy—that I may be dead, but never inconstant. I would fain impart the comfort which I want, and say to my dearest friend, “ Do not yet despair, but still cherish hope, and live to love—live for

ADELA.”

Just as I had finished reading the above letter, I heard a noise like that of the falling of a table in the bed-room. This was succeeded by what I thought was a gargling in the throat, and a groan followed. I put my letter hastily into my bosom, and passed into the next apartment, when to my infinite amazement, I found Jacquolina with a rope round her neck, suspended from the ceiling. The table which had fallen, was that by which she had raised herself, so as to reach the staple which she had selected to hang upon. My mind, was wholly occupied with Adela’s letter, and when I beheld this alarming sight, I was so confounded and amazed,

that I stood staring at the awful spectacle, without power to act, or to determine what ought to be done. For the delay thus occasioned, I know that I have since been severely blamed. I will however venture to affirm, that, all the circumstances considered, many a husband, placed in the same situation, would have been as much affected as I was, and have remained, for a time, as motionless as I did.

CHAPTER VI.

I assist my wife, but do not get thanked for my kindness—I answer Adela's letter, and leave Sydney, with the intention of escaping from the colony—Lean Iniquity introduces me to a new companion, and suggests to me a measure of monstrous economy, which I have the imprudence to reject.

How long I should have remained thus immovable, I cannot say, if I had not perceived that my wife's feet touched the ground. Observing that circumstance, I was so far relieved from apprehension, that I became more myself, and hastened to Jacquolina's assistance, who acknowledged the benevolent effort on my part, in these words :

“ You are a pretty devil of a husband, arn’t you, to look on, while your wife’s hanging, and only come to help her, when you see the rope has given way, and that she can help herself?”

To the opinion thus implied, she adhered, and always, I am well informed, declared that “had such not been the case, I should have remained a quiet spectator of her last efforts to dance upon nothing.”

I shall not enlarge on the great injustice done to me, by this surmise, but I must remark that extreme anxiety on my part, would have been almost laughable, as when I came to look about me, nothing was more clear, than that she had taken excellent care to guard against such a catastrophe. Jacquiline wished, without risk of mischief, to enjoy the reputation of having attempted to commit suicide, as attempts of that nature, in the opinion of the best judges, always throw infinite lustre on the character of a lady of romantic taste, and superior sensibility.

I performed the ceremony of cutting my wife down, from a wish to do every thing that is considered proper, in cases of that description, and Jacquiline went through her part amazingly well. She fainted, revived at the proper time, and uttered some very pathetic things, (which I only omit from a fear that they

might distress the reader too much,) after which, she went to bed, took some warm wine whey, and fainted again, which made the scene, in the opinion of two of our female neighbours, who had by this time come to offer their service, vastly moving.

I was advised, when she revived for the second time, to withdraw, that she might compose her spirits. I immediately did so, and being anxious to give her a sufficient opportunity for recovering completely, while I was absent, determined, on being advertised by Lean Iniquity, that every thing was ready for our departure, never to return.

But as yet, it was too light for us to leave Sydney, without being observed. The hour which had to pass before we could venture forth, I occupied in writing to Adela. I considered it my duty, to press on her the advantages which might be secured both for herself, and for her father, by her union with young Chiswell, supposing him to be such a man as she could, under other circumstances, have approved. I wanted resolution to acknowledge

that I had become a husband, but I strongly insisted on the total impossibility of her ever becoming mine. I especially opposed the idea of her coming to New South Wales, as in my wretched state, I truly said, I could not wish to look on her. Such being the case, I most earnestly assured her, nothing could so greatly mitigate the rigour of my destiny, as to learn that she had found happiness with another, and as a last proof of that generous love, of which I had been the object, I conjured her, if possible, without violence to her own feelings, to save my friend her father, from the malice which pursued him.

By the time I had finished my letter, Lean Iniquity informed me, that the horses, he had engaged, had been led out of the town, and were now waiting for us. On these, he said, we could travel many miles before daylight, to a place where those who were to be our companions in the enterprize, and who had already absconded, were then waiting for us. The horses would be brought back by the person who owned them, and no trace would remain

of the course we had taken. He finished by hinting, that the expense of this arrangement would be something considerable, but as I had plenty of money, he knew that that would be no consideration with me.

Before starting, he did not forget to inquire if I had taken his advice, and drawn all my money out of the bank. I told him I had done so, with the exception of eighty pounds, which I had left in, to guard against exciting suspicion. He admitted that a blind was no bad thing, but deeply regretted that I should lose so much of my money. This, he said, more than once, and though, I cannot, upon the whole, venture to pronounce Lean Iniquity to be a very amiable character, in this instance, I am convinced that his grief was sincere.

He now took me out of the town, to a place where he had appointed the person to meet us with the horses. We found the man at the appointed spot, with a convict who had agreed to escape with us. This was a man named Jack Rafferty. Lean Iniquity described him to be a gentleman of high birth and great con-

nnections in *the Holy Land*, and moreover it was announced to me that Mr. Rafferty, was exactly in my line, as he had been sent to that part of the world where we met, in consideration of the share which he had had, in a daring burglary.

Rafferty, I was further assured, if we could manage to get to India, would be of great service to us, from the circumstance of many of his relations being settled there. When I inquired in which of the presidencies they were to be found, my friend replied, he did not exactly know, but he observed that that was of no importance, as if we did not light upon them in one, it was easy to look for them in the others, and he evidently supposed it was not more difficult to pass from Bombay, to Calcutta, or Madras, than it would be in England, to go from Pentonville to Holloway, or Camden Town.

I felt that Lean Iniquity treated too lightly the difficulties in the way of journeying from one presidency to another. It was, however, of no use arguing now, though the reflections which it suggested were annoying, and I did not feel

particularly gratified, at learning that in consideration of what Mr. Rafferty would do for us when we got to India, the expense of his outfit now, and any future expenses that might be necessary to his safety or comfort, were to be paid for, out of my money.

If I had thought it prudent to say exactly what occurred to me, I should have told Mr. Rafferty in very concise terms, that he might be companion to some other runaway, but should never be mine. As matters stood, I put the best face I could on the matter, and exerted myself so far, as to tell the ruffian that I was very glad of his company. Mentally, I justified this to myself, by the thought, that the same words were commonly used in England, to welcome those whose presence inspired any thing but gladness, or satisfaction.

We mounted our horses, and set off. Being four in number, Lean Iniquity suggested that less observation would be attracted, if we went two and two, than if we kept in a body. In consequence of this hint, Rafferty and the owner of the horses went first, and were followed

by us, at a moderate distance. My companion gave me every assurance that we should succeed. It was impossible, he said, that we could be looked after, for two days at the least, as he had taken care before we left Sydney, to mention Jacquilina's attempt at suicide, and to say that as it was necessary for me to be in close attendance on her during the following day, which was Sunday, of course it would be impossible for me to go to church, or indeed to leave my home.

Shortly after midnight, our guide halted at the door of a small public-house, which was kept by a person known to him, who readily rose at his summons, undertook the care of our horses, and set before us some cold kangaroo's flesh. My companions ate very heartily, and were exceedingly jolly. I made a moderate meal myself, but could not participate in their mirth. They remarked upon my melancholy, and said I ought to be in better spirits than any of them, as I was not only making my escape from the colony, but also from my wife.

I could not but admit that there was some-

thing in that. They laughed at the idea excessively, and considered it to be uncommonly witty, and original. It might appear so to them, but the same thought had occurred to me before.

From the keeper of this house, I learned, that we had left Paramatta on our right, and were then distant from that place, about seven miles. Having rested for three hours, in order to rest the horses, we again prepared to mount. Our host gave us directions, how to proceed on our journey. He advised us to travel the Windsor road, till we reached a house, which he described, within three miles of that place, and which, though but a small ill-provided hovel, would afford us all the accommodation we could require. There, he said, we could stay till dusk, by which time, both ourselves, and our horses, would be in a fit state for travelling, and we could then do so with less risk, than would attend a similar movement in the day time.

Rafferty, who had once been in a working gang, at Windsor, said he knew the house which had been mentioned, well, and it was the

same to which he had intended to conduct us, as he hoped to find there several old *pals* of his, who had run away some time before.

We set off, and proceeded with considerable rapidity, and without meeting with any accident of importance on the road.

It was between six and seven in the morning, when Rafferty gave us notice, that we were not far from the house at which we were to rest. This was not disagreeable intelligence, for as I had not been accustomed to ride of late, I found equestrianism rather inconvenient. I was thinking of the relief I should experience, after it should be found that the horses were no longer necessary, when Lean Iniquity, who had been riding forward with Rafferty, fell back, leaving him, and our other companion, together, for the purpose of speaking to me.

“ Well !” he exclaimed, “ we are near our journey’s end, and this fellow expects to be sent back presently with his horses.”

“ I am not sorry for that,” I said, “ and I think the cattle have brought us well.”

“ So they have,” said he—“ and so they

ought, for the fellow claims forty pounds for the use of them ;—there's a rascal, now !”

I admitted the charge was high.

“ Yes,” said Lean Iniquity, “ he takes advantage of us, because he thinks we cannot help ourselves. What a cruel thing it is, for one man to take advantage of another !”

I assented to this most cordially, and my friend perceiving that I was perfectly of his way of thinking, proceeded as follows—

“ Now, I and Rafferty have been thinking, what a shame it is, that you should be robbed ; and we were, therefore, saying to ourselves, that if we *stall* off this fellow, it would save a pretty bit of money, and we should be quite as safe as we shall be, if he goes back again, because, you know, when we are out of sight, he may *blab*.”

I knew that, in the language of Newgate, the verb “ to stall,” means to put out of the way, but I really did not believe it possible, for one human being so coolly to propose the destruction of another, as Lean Iniquity had done ; for it was obvious that he contemplated

murder. Astonishment and horror, prevented me from immediately replying, which led Lean Iniquity to suppose, that I was balancing in my mind, the advantages and disadvantages of cutting our companion's throat. The truth, however, was, that though disgusted and shocked beyond measure, I doubted whether this was a specimen of brutal jesting, or a serious proposition.

"Come, come," said he, "you must make up your mind soon. Here we can do the trick, without any danger of being *stagged*, but if we go further, his bellowing, when he finds his *gullet* in danger, may, perhaps, bring somebody to his rescue."

"And can you really be in earnest?" said I. "Can you think of murdering a poor fellow in cool blood?"

"Only consider," said he, "what a saving it will be. Forty pounds, let me tell you, is money. A *trap* is very glad to hang a man at that price, in England, and why should we object to knock a fellow's brains out here, on the same terms? Now, if you consent to be in

it, Rafferty will bring him down, only we must each have a finger in the pye, that there may be no peaching."

" You are a wretched hell-hound !" said I, " and Rafferty is another !"

" What do you say I am ?" he demanded, with an air of offended dignity.

" A miscreant—an abhorrent miscreant !" I replied.

" Do you mean to be personal !" he inquired, and, withal, he looked so fierce, that I began to think he had it in contemplation to *send me a message*.

" I mean," said I, " that I am no cut-throat, and if you are wretch enough to pursue the murderous design you have avowed, you shall not find an accomplice in me."

" Then it's *no go*," he coolly rejoined, " for Rafferty won't finish the business by himself. He insists that we shall all be principals."

" I care not what he insists upon, I will have nothing to do with murder, and you are a baser villain ten times over, than I, till now, believed you to be, or you would never have

entertained the horrible thought, even for a moment."

"A pretty row you are making about nothing," said he. "Here, I wanted to save your money, and this is the return I get for it."

"I do not want money, saved by such a crime as you advise."

"A crime!" he exclaimed, with a look of mingled rage and scorn; then, seeming to recollect himself, he suddenly lowered his voice, and attempted an air of jocularity—"Why, what a fool you are," said he. "Upon my soul, you have no taste for a joke. Why, I was only *chaffing* you."

"Indeed!"

"To be sure. How the devil could you ever suppose that I was in earnest—I was only *trying it on*."

"Indeed!"

"Didn't you see I was laughing all the time? It was all a joke."

"Well," said I, "there's an end of it. Let us have no more of this jesting."

Our conversation closed here. He spoke to

Rafferty for a few moments, and then returned to me. It was my opinion that he remained close by my side, for fear I should tell the horse-dealer what had been suggested. We did not speak again for some time. My thoughts were occupied with the transcendent depravity of my companions; for all Lean Iniquity's attempts to pass off his vile proposition, as a joke, went for nothing with me; and he was evidently mortified at his failure, and not a little disgusted by what, he considered, the ungrateful return I had made for his kind anxiety to save my money, by prevailing on me to engage in the perpetration of murder.

CHAPTER VII.

Our journey is continued—We join a party of Bush Rangers—A friend offers to take charge of my property—I meditate a new escape, but the person from whom I seek assistance, scornfully refuses it, in consequence of my having saved his life.

IT was now broad day, and we were not yet in sight of the place of our destination. The horses were jaded, and advanced but slowly; and this circumstance elicited a display of Mr. Rafferty's temper and accomplishments, which was hardly wanted, to enable me to form a proper estimate of his character. He swore most blasphemously, and beat the poor beast on which he rode, so unmercifully, that its master was obliged more than once to interfere. His first representations were not attended to; but those subsequently addressed to him, produced a volley of abuse, with a string of curses, imprecated both on him and on his horse, the

latter being denominated “ dog’s meat,” by Mr. Rafferty, to which he prefixed an adjective, which was in great request with him, and which, not untruly, described the said dog’s meat, to be in a bleeding state. A reflection of this sort, cast on a part of his stud, in addition to the outrages previously sustained, was more than the man could bear, and he now, with great fluency, returned the foul language he had received, with a very handsome addition, by way of *compliment*, or interest, on the black-guard capital, advanced by Mr. Rafferty. He finished, by telling the latter, that if he did not clap on his muzzle, he would give him a *pelt on the cocoa*, which should not leave him *mag* enough for a last dying speech.

This retort, I expected, would have provoked Mr. Rafferty exceedingly, but it produced no such effect. On the contrary, it soothed him so much, that he made no reply further than by inquiring of his antagonist, in justification of his late anger, “ why the devil the horse did not go on then ?”

I was still admiring the amiable change,

which had been so suddenly produced in my companion, when he, forgetting all past anger, in present joy, remarked, the *crib* we wanted was in sight at last.

We approached a low hut, which seemed to contain but two rooms. We entered it with little ceremony, and I found that it was more spacious than I had supposed, additional apartments having been joined to the original edifice. The owner of it was a convict settler, who evidently expected us; and when Rafferty demanded “if *they* had been,” he answered in the affirmative, and added, that “*they* would be there in a *brace of shakes*,” meaning by that, in a few moments.

In less than a quarter of an hour, the parties of whom he spoke, made their appearance, and four ruffians joined our party, whose fierce looks, neglected dress, and reckless air, would have made them, to use a very favourite critical phrase, a “valuable acquisition,” to the villainy of any theatre.

Blinking Harry, if not the leader of the gang, was the chief spokesman. He told Rafferty,

that he was jolly well pleased, to have got an old *pal* back, and added, that now they were joined by him, and the other two, they would be in better plight than ever.

I did not exactly understand what he had said, and what followed, was equally enigmatical, for when he accosted, first Lean Iniquity, and then me, he said something which seemed intended to be both civil and consoling, and which, as I heard him, amounted to this, that “we should find they were fellows who stood for no repairs, and all we had to do, was to take good care to *weigh* our *weight*, and the governor, would soon be glad to grant a general pardon.

The others assented, and exultingly remarked that they might go on without any danger, worth thinking about.

I collected at last, from their discourse, that they intended to engage in some desperate enterprise, in which I, and my late travelling companions, were expected to co-operate.

Once or twice, I attempted to turn the conversation to the probability of our reaching the coast, without accident, and finding the means

of escaping from that shore altogether. My wish, that we might do so, was not taken any particular notice of by them. Blinking Harry, indeed, remarked, it would be a good thing to give the go-by to a country like that, in which, from the absence of a representative system, and the want of trial by jury, all sorts of corruption and tyranny, were kept up, but the others did not pretend to give it a thought, and I heard nothing said about the steps which would be necessary, to procure a ship to enable us to wait on Mr. Rafferty's friends, in India.

Meat and spirits were set before us, and we all made a hearty meal, myself not excepted, for though my mind was a good deal harassed, and I did not feel remarkably conscious of the want of food, when it came before me, I mechanically occupied myself, as my neighbours did, and disturbed and unhappy as I was, I so exerted myself with some relish, I may say, with some sense of enjoyment.

After a little further conversation, we all laid down to sleep. Here my companions had decidedly the advantage, and they soon obtained

the repose they sought, but which I invoked in vain. I repeatedly strove to forget myself, but to no purpose, and, at length, I arose from the mat which had been assigned to me, for a bed, seated myself on the stool, which I had previously occupied, and reclined my head on the table, to wait till the rest of the party should awake.

But that sleep which had fled from my anxiety to win it, like a coy beauty, offended by too much importunity, seemed ready to favour me when despairing of success, I sunk into the tranquility of indifference. Confused and unconnected images, floated before me,—my thoughts wildly wandered from subject to subject, and, at length, my eyes involuntarily closed, and recollection was no more.

This calm, was of short duration, for I was almost immediately disturbed by perceiving something moving about my coat. I was, however, too sleepy to take particular notice of the circumstance, and was again nodding off when I perceived a hand glide into the pocket of my trowsers, and starting up, I found Lean Iniquity by my side.

The accusing and reproachful look, which I threw on him, told him what I thought. Perhaps I should have deemed words superfluous in any case, but my *friend* made signs for me, by no means to speak, while he beckoned me to the door of the hut with great earnestness. At first, I did not attend to him, but, on his repeating the act with manifestations of the most intense anxiety, that I should follow him, I did so.

He walked about thirty yards from the cottage, with an air of mystery, still making signs for me to be silent. At length, he spoke as follows:—

“ I beg your pardon,—I am really sorry to have disturbed you.—Upon my soul I am very sorry, that I have spoiled your nap, I am indeed.”

“ I told him he need say no more, for I believed that he was sorry I had waked—quite as sorry as he said he was.”

And this was no compliment, I really spoke what I thought.

“ Why, the fact is, my dear fellow,” said he,

“ I wished, to take care, of what you were in danger of losing.”

Again, I told him that I believed him; and so I did, for I had no doubt that he intended emptying my pocket of my money.

“ I mean,” said he, and his visage wore that villainous grin, which was with him a substitute for good-humoured laughter, “ I was going to take care, of what, you would otherwise have been robbed of.”

“ You need hardly have taken the trouble to rob me, for fear I should be robbed,” I rather peevishly answered.

“ You don’t understand where you are,” said he, “ nor what the fellows are, whom we have left snoring in the hut.”

“ They appear to me,” said I, “ to be a brutal banditti, who expect us to unite with them.”

“ The truth is, these are *Bush Rangers*, and Rafferty, I did not know it before, had sent word to them that we would join them. However, it will only be for a short time. If Rafferty won’t go with us, you, and I, can give ’em the double, and be off over the blue mountains.”

I did not understand how we were to effect the object which I had had in view, by passing over the blue mountains, but my eyes were pretty well open, to Lean Iniquity's treachery. At first, I had thought him only mean, and fraudulent in little things, but I now saw plainly, that there was nothing in the shape of crime, to which he was not equal. It was evident that he had no thought of making his way to the coast, and cared not what falsehood he imposed upon me. I made him no direct answer, but merely remarked, that "he had deceived me altogether."

He replied, with an oath, that he had done nothing of the kind ; and then referring to the suspicion I had just manifested, on the occasion of my pocket receiving a visit from his hand, he lamented my being so ungenerously *smoaky*. He proceeded to assure me, that what he had attempted, was purely in the way of friendship, for as the *Bush Rangers* made it a rule to insist on a division of any money, which a new member of their fraternity might have, he, having undergone search, while I was asleep, had pro-

posed silently to transfer the cash which was in my pocket, into his, intending of course, to return it to me, when I had undergone the regular scrutiny. It was, therefore, that he had beckoned me forth in silence, and I could now give him the money, and it would be perfectly safe.

This was rather too barefaced a trick, to succeed, and I could not help treating the proposition with contempt, as a ridiculous attempt to coax me out of what he had not succeeded in stealing.

The scorn with which I treated him, really wounded his feelings. From wheedling, he passed to threatening, and told me, that since I would not let him befriend me, I must take the consequences; he would now let me see that I was not to have every thing my own way. All he had to do, was to mention to the Bush Rangers what I had about me, and they would presently *ease me* of it. Lean Iniquity added, that, whatever I might say, would be useless, and he, by the disclosure, should at once become a great man among them; and now,

he triumphantly inquired what I had to say to that?

“ I have this to say,” I answered, “ that you reckon a little too fast. You shall not have it in your power to do what you threaten.”

“ Indeed!—We’ll soon see that!—How will you prevent it?”

“ By giving them every farthing myself, rather than suffer you to get it.”

Lean Iniquity’s face changed colour—that is, it turned from saffron to sable, while I spoke, and he seemed infinitely disconcerted, when I turned towards the hut, to do, what I had said I would do.

“ Stop! stop!” he cried. “ Don’t be in such a hurry. We had better settle this matter in another way. It will do neither of us any good, to let them have the money *we* have brought with us.”

“ Perhaps not, but of the two I prefer letting them receive it, from my hands, to seeing them get it from yours.”

“ The better way will be, to let them have it from neither. Come, I’ll tell you what we’ll

do—we'll divide. Give me half of what you have brought, and nobody shall know that you have a shilling, and each can take care of his own—come now, that will be fair."

I started with fresh indignation, at this impudent demand of the half of my property in acknowledgment of his kindness, for not getting me robbed of the whole. At first I was resolved to give the Bush Rangers all. It however soon occurred to me, that the chance of keeping half, was better than at once sacrificing the whole. I also reflected that he would be in some measure in my power, as I could, if I pleased, make it known that he had money. After a little further grumbling, I allowed my *friend* to plunder me, to the extent last proposed, and divided my money, amounting to about three hundred pounds, with him. I made him pay half the sum, which was to remunerate the lender of the horses. He rather objected to this, and was evidently surprised, that I could be so unreasonable as to ask such a thing.

This matter settled, Lean Iniquity returned to the hut, carrying his booty with him, and I,

left alone, indulged in melancholy reflections on my unhappy fate. I was by no means assured that the wretch who had just robbed me would not even now betray my secret to the gang, though I had his word and honour, both of which he was so generous as to give without my asking for them, that he would do nothing of the kind ; and I regretted sincerely, having ventured to attempt escaping in company with such a confirmed villain.

While thus musing, I saw the horse-dealer coming towards me to claim payment for his services. It occurred to me that the wisest thing I could do, would be to break from my present association as soon as possible. To return even to Sydney, would, I thought, be preferable to remaining with these desperadoes. But just then I recollect my wife, and contemplating the welcome I might expect from her, the idea of returning was of course abandoned.

Still I was inclined to leave the Bush Rangers, and I thought if I could prevail on the man who now approached to favour my views, that

I might effect my purpose with little trouble. He was to set out on his return that evening. If he would consent to wait at the distance of half or three quarters of a mile from the hut, for me to join him, I thought I could manage to find my way so far, and he might then have it in his power to conduct me to some place, from which I might hope to make my way to the coast, and in the end escape from the colony.

This was the idea of a moment. It was wild and confused, but danger and difficulty were hardly to be thought of, where the object was to get out of a connection like that, into which I had been betrayed. I therefore determined, at once, to ascertain whether I could find in him, the ally I wanted.

I paid him first, in order to put him in good humour; and to be more sure of effecting this, I next praised his horses, and then, I praised himself. Afterwards I bitterly reprobated the affronting conduct of Rafferty, and having done so much to propitiate him, I boldly came to the main point.

The answer I received surprised me. He said

he understood what I was at. Lean Iniquity had told him, that I had proposed to murder him to save the money, which I had agreed to pay him ; and as he (Lean Iniquity) would not be concerned in it, I now wanted an opportunity for doing it alone.

I was so confounded by this reply, that my confusion, seemed to justify the suspicion which Lean Iniquity had excited against me. He left me with the conviction that I had nothing to say for myself, which was not a very strange conclusion, as it was quite clear that I was at that moment unable to speak.

I thought of following him, to deny and to disprove what had been said, but I reflected that however easy it might be to do the former, the latter might prove a task of difficulty, and indeed one, which would of necessity require more time for its fulfilment, than remained at my command. I hastily turned over in my mind, the securities which I might offer, to satisfy the man that he had nothing to fear from me, but could think of none likely to answer the purpose. If I gave into his keeping

what remained of my cash, an experiment not altogether to my taste, I was by no means clear that his scruples would be removed, as he might conclude that the violence, which he supposed I contemplated, would give me back my own, with whatever else might be found on his person.

With deep regret, therefore, though sensible of their importance, I suffered the few moments to elapse, in which, I might have attempted to persuade him to favour my retreat, without making any effort to improve them. After having paid him, it would have been difficult for me to converse with him without exciting the suspicions of the desperate wretches, into whose toils I had been thrown. They knew the truth—they knew that murder had been suggested by them, and opposed by me, and would not have failed to conjecture that I was making a merit of the part I had acted, to the individual whose life had been probably spared through my means, and this might have led them to some act of instantaneous violence against both. I consequently felt, that I could do no more, and must not for the

present, hope to escape from their detested society.

The knowledge which I had gained of the last piece of villainous misrepresentation, accomplished by my miserable companion, Lean Iniquity, did not diminish the vexation and sorrow which I had previously felt. I saw that I was exposed to every danger, that could result from an atrocious connection, which, while it threatened me momentarily with the murderous consequences of some new treachery, brought also the fearful apprehension, that it would involve me in some dreadful crime, which it was manifest they were prepared to commit, and in which it was no less obvious, they would compel me, if possible, to participate.

CHAPTER VIII.

I remain with the Bush Rangers, and despair of effecting my escape—We make an attempt at robbery, but are foiled—I believe myself to be an object of suspicion with my companions—We pass Hunter's River, and enter the woods.

TOWARDS the close of the day, the horses with their owner, commenced their homeward journey, and every hope of getting away from the Bush Rangers, by their means, was at an end. I witnessed their departure with feelings of melancholy, truly excruciating. On all former occasions, whatever the affliction which I had to deplore, whatever the errors past, with which I had to reproach myself, I had not experienced the dread which now came over me, of being shortly involved in scenes of real guilt, which in all human probability, would terminate in bringing me to a disgraceful end, in that coun-

try, and thus make it appear to those in England who remembered me with kindness, and for whose good opinion I was still solicitous, that the fate I had once so narrowly escaped, was one which I was resolute to deserve.

For some time after the animals and their master were out of sight, I could think of nothing else. I even thought for a moment of attempting to follow and overtake him, first to undeceive, and then to prevail upon him to afford me some assistance. But my motions appeared to me, to be observed. Perhaps it was only fancy, but I suspected that my plan had been communicated to the gang. Be that as it might, I could not move without exciting suspicion, and if, risking detection, I had made the attempt, ignorant as I was of the road, there was little chance of my overtaking the equestrian, and, supposing even that to be happily affected, it was still doubtful whether the man would believe my story, and lend himself to my views.

I therefore remained, most unwillingly remained, with Rafferty and his associates. Late

at night, the word was given to move on, and we left the hut in which we had been sheltered through the day, and I now learned that we were to proceed to a rich settler's house, which was described to me as standing between the townships of Richmond and Wilberforce, which were but a few miles distant. Three or four more of the Bush Rangers were to join us, on the way, the house was then to be attacked and stripped of every thing of value, and we were triumphantly assured that it would furnish "*swag*" enough for us all.

I knew my own insignificance too well, to expect that any thing I could offer, would induce them to abandon the nefarious project which had been avowed, but when the expediency of taking good care that none of the inmates should ever give evidence against us, was urged as necessary, I denied that it was so. For acting thus, I was bitterly reviled as a "*cowardly sneak*." I resented the charge with some warmth, and said my old acquaintance, Jerry Wildfire, had never called me any thing of the kind, and what I had said was mainly

dictated by a knowledge of the fact, that the governor never suffered those who were concerned in a murder, to get off, while others were almost certain of being leniently dealt with.

This explanation was favourably received, and my having mentioned Wildfire, who had been hanged, as my old friend, operated considerably to my advantage, as it led the banditti, of which I was now a member, to think my connections in England, were somewhat out of the common way.

I judged it to be about midnight, when Blinking Harry directed us to halt, and I found that we had arrived at the scene of intended depredation. A low whistle was heard. This announced the timely arrival of our allies. It was cautiously answered, and immediately afterwards we were joined by two persons, one of whom reported, that a third who had been with them, was stationed at some distance to look out, while the *trick* was doing, and in case of any alarm being necessary, would discharge his pistol, as a signal for our retreat.

A rude sort of introduction then took place,

and Lean Iniquity, Rafferty, and myself, were stated to be the new comers, who were expected to join some weeks before, but who had not till now, been able to "get to *the Bush*."

We then approached the house, which it had previously been determined to rob. My heart palpitated from terror, such as I had never known till then. I had before been accused of crime, but was now really to become a thief. This was my thought. However there was no help for it. From all I saw at the time, and have learned since, to have manifested a resolution not to be concerned in the affair, would have been to invite instant death.

Blinking Harry opened the gate of the enclosure, which surrounded the house. At that moment, a window in the upper floor was opened, and a man demanded in a hoarse, and even in a threatening voice, what we wanted there.

"Come down and open your door, and we'll let you know," replied our leader. "Come, be quick, or we'll pepper your sconce with lead."

Blinking Harry had not to wait for an an-

swer: one was promptly supplied by a discharge of fire-arms, from the man who had first presented himself, assisted by a second person, who now made his appearance.

Our party was not prepared for this. Rafferty called out, that we had better halt, and just then a noise, which seemed to me like the falling of a pair of tongs, was heard in the house. This fearful sound, spread great consternation in our ranks, which was not a little heightened, when the voice that addressed us before, roared out with great earnestness,

“ Come up, my lads—make haste. Here Abraham, Isaac, quick—quick”—

And he went on with such a long string of names, that I thought he was reciting the first chapter of St. Matthew, but I could not hear the whole of it, from the noise made by his blunderbuss and pistols, which were now fired again.

Lean Iniquity, had run away the moment the first report was heard. I was tempted to follow his example, but was deterred by the bravery

with which Blinking Harry stood his ground, and which I admired exceedingly. He remained firm, but this, I found, was owing to the horror he felt at finding that a shot had entered his body, and which for the next three minutes rendered him perfectly immovable.

The second volley did no execution, and our wounded comrade, now revived sufficiently to perceive that Rafferty, and the rest of his corps, had commenced their retreat, without troubling him for the word of command. He exerted himself to run after them, and at a distance from the house of about half a mile, he found them waiting for him.

It filled me with astonishment to see so many desperate and bold-looking fellows, who had appeared daring enough to stand their ground against the most formidable opposition, thus put to flight by two individuals, for no more than two had been visible. They, however, all voted their retreat to have been most wisely decided upon, as the falling of the tongs, which I thought I had heard, they declared to be the clanging of a stand of muskets; and they had

no doubt, that, somehow or other, their project had got wind, and that a company of soldiers had in consequence been sent for to protect the premises.

I did not believe a word of all this, I confess ; but nevertheless, as I had no desire to return to the attack, I said nothing of what I thought. Blinking Harry was bleeding fast, and could proceed with difficulty. It was, however, necessary to go forward about five miles, to a house where they were in the habit of calling occasionally, before they could obtain any accommodation for the wounded man. We therefore continued our march, from time to time assisting our leader, by letting him lean on some of us, and occasionally carrying him over the most rugged part of the ground.

After a march of rather more than two hours, we arrived at the house they had mentioned, which was that of a settler. He was poor, and, lying completely at their mercy, had long been in the habit of giving them any assistance of which they might stand in need, in return, for which the Bush Rangers, when successful in

their operations, bestowed on him occasionally some portion of their booty. Here, Blinking Harry found himself so seriously indisposed, that he wished to stay where he was. His wish was complied with; but as the unlooked-for detention of the leader, would derange some of the plans previously formed at head-quarters, if the whole of his present company should remain with him, and as, moreover, there would be considerable difficulty in procuring the necessary rations for so large a force, and withal not a little danger in their staying so near the scene of their recent defeat, it was thought better that all but Harry, should proceed without delay to the principal haunt of the Bush Rangers, which was at that time in the woods, near Hunter's River.

Acting on this decision, we set forward that very morning. The danger of being seen moving during the day, was considered less than that of continuing in the vicinity of the company of soldiers, whose fire-arms they all swore they had distinctly heard, on the preceding night.

Our journey was sufficiently fatiguing, and to me any thing but consoling. Every mile I advanced, I felt that I had got more remote from civilization, and was more than ever in the power of the bravoes I marched with, and who affected to consider me as one of themselves.

But though they called me comrade, or pal, and pretended to be satisfied of my having voluntarily joined them, I was by no means satisfied, that I was held by them, to be entitled to equal privileges with the rest of the party. I had noted repeated whisperings, of which I suspected myself to be the object. One or two words even had reached my ear, which were of rather alarming import. To me they conveyed the idea, that my death was in contemplation, but that it was judged advisable to defer executing their purpose for the present. In fine, constantly suspecting my companions, and believing myself to be suspected by them, I never laid down to rest at night, without feeling that it was by no means improbable I should never open my eyes, to behold another morning.

It was with such feelings, that I travelled

with the Bush Rangers, towards Hunter's River. Our journey was much prolonged by the circuitous course we were obliged to take, on account of the nature of the country, and the necessity said to exist, and, for aught I know, with truth, for guarding against being seen on our route, or tracked by the military, asserted to be in our rear. The latter was very much dreaded, and as I have since learned, not without reason, as the soldiers sent to apprehend runaways, frequently availed themselves of the services of the natives, who being accustomed to track the opossum and the kangaroo, had their perception so quickened, that they could find out the print of a foot-mark, where it would not be visible to a common eye, and even discover, from the form or direction of it, if there were any striking peculiarity of gait, or habit of walking, in the party by whom it had been indented.

At length we reached the banks of Hunter's River, and plunged into the forests near its banks. The gloomy abyss which we penetrated, seemed to make Lean Iniquity more

thoughtful than he had previously been ; and he remarked to me, that this was not what he had formerly expected. He assured me that it had always been told, that the Bush Rangers had found a safe and pleasant retreat, abundantly provided with every comfort. At present he did not perceive that they in reality possessed any thing of the kind ; and all he knew on the subject was, that if things did not presently improve, he for one should be likely to *make himself scarce*. He added, he did not mean to be in such a concern as that, and they should keep him as many nights as days.

This, or something to this effect, he whispered to me after we had made our grand halt. I had previously been meditating an escape, and should, under other circumstances, have eagerly caught at the idea of getting a companion ; but after the experience I had had of Lean Iniquity, I was resolved to place no confidence in him. To say the truth, I was very much disposed to believe that his object was to induce me to take some step, which might commit me with the gang, and raise him in their

estimation, for betraying to them my projects, which, he had certainly reason to conclude, pointed to an unauthorised retreat.

I do not know that I was right in my conjecture, but I was never quite satisfied that it was wrong. I afterwards had reason to believe that his vexation was real. His object from the first was to make discoveries, connected with the Bush Rangers, which would be acceptable to the government at Sydney. By making himself an important witness against them, he hoped to procure the remission of his sentence, at the expense of the lives of his present associates. He had, however, calculated on much rude enjoyment, while maturing his treachery, and was now dispirited, as well on account of the privations which were to be endured, as on that of the difficulties which the rugged aspect of the country, opposed to the execution of his ultimate design.

For my part, I felt as wretched as it was possible for a human being to feel. On the stage, I had seen many pleasant representations of a marauder's mode of living; but the plenty

and mirth, there exhibited, as inseparable from the jolly robber's cave, were not to be found among the Bush Rangers. Two dreary huts, wretchedly constructed of green wood, and covered with the bark of the *eucalyptus*, furnished the only shelter from the elements which they could claim, save that afforded by the foliage of the neighbouring trees. The fare was as scanty as it was precarious; and while all appeared to concur in schemes of violence directed against others, it was quite clear, that their union was endangered by mutual fears, by jealousy and hatred among themselves. My authority may not be thought sufficient to destroy the reputation of that venerable proverb, which teaches that there is "honour among thieves." There might be something of the kind in connection with the Bush Rangers; but in the language of a celebrated song, which delighted in the last century,

"I only say I could not find it."

CHAPTER IX.

I make up my mind to desert from the Bush Rangers, and carry my resolution into effect—I travel alone, but very unexpectedly find a companion, whom I treat with little ceremony, and take a considerable sum from his person.

AT the huts we found four wretches, as ferocious in deportment, and miserable in appearance, as the others to whom I had previously been introduced. They were not a little shocked at hearing of Blinking Harry's misfortune, not from their generous regard for him, but from the fears inspired by the news we brought, which, to say the truth, might well justify in those who had not been with us, some alarm ; as to cover their own want of courage, my late fellow-travellers multiplied most enormously, the dangers to which we had been exposed, and the supposed numbers of the military, by whom we had been attacked and defeated.

In consequence of the apprehension thus excited, it was thought right to lie still for the present, at least till something should be heard of the military, who were so positively stated to be in pursuit of us.

I could not at once make up my mind whether the pause thus induced, was beneficial to me or otherwise. It was satisfactory to me, that a respite from participation in crime was afforded, but the leisure which it gave the Bush Rangers, to criticise my conduct, greatly, as it appeared to me, increased the danger to which I had previously been exposed. I felt that all my efforts to seem as reckless, and as indurated as themselves, were too poorly executed to deceive such experienced miscreants as I had to do with.

Among the anxieties which pressed heavily on my heart, was one, growing out of the kindness of Adela. I had persuaded myself when I left Sydney, that I should soon be enabled to send a second letter, especially pressing her not to act on the generous resolution which she had announced. I could no longer expect that this

would be in my power, and I tortured myself with the reflection, that if the one I had written, should have miscarried, or have failed to dissuade her from seeking to rejoin me in New South Wales, she might in consequence encounter all the dangers of the seas, and reach the colony, to hear, that her faithless lover had married soon after his arrival, had subsequently deserted his wife, and lastly, joined a desperate, and notoriously ferocious banditti.

When I reflected on the immense sacrifice, which she had avowed herself disposed to make for me, I could not help lamenting, that it was my deplorable fate, ever to be tantalised with the near view of some good, at the precise moment, when circumstances placed it for ever beyond my reach. Weaned as I was from England, if Mr. Haversham and his daughter, free from those prejudices which it might have been expected would govern their conduct, disdained not to seek me in a distant land, how greatly would my condition have been ameliorated—or rather, what boundless happiness would have been brought to me by their

arrival! Unhappily, my own want of caution, and the designing villainy of others, had placed me in such a situation, that I could not profit by such unimagined kindness, but must, on the contrary, experience an intolerable addition to my distress, if attempting to act on the project announced to me, friends so dear, should come to New South Wales, only to hear injurious stories of my weakness and depravity, and to experience the most afflicting disappointment themselves.

“ But why,” I sometimes thought, “ why indulge these miserable reflections—why think of what might have been ? To do so is of no use. The error which I have committed cannot now be repaired.”

And I attempted to reconcile myself to my fate, and to withdraw my mind from the contemplation of objects which had long been so justly valued, and the loss of which was the source of such unaffected regret.

Still, I could not dismiss the ideas which tortured me—I could not learn forgetfulness.

Perilous as the undertaking would be, I felt

tempted, at all hazards, to leave the Bush Rangers, and take the chance of finding my way back to Sydney, or some other inhabited place ; and I was inclined to make the experiment immediately, for I reflected, that if, by remaining with them for a season, I should be likely to obtain better information, as to the direction in which it would be necessary to journey, it was by no means improbable, that such delay would produce my destruction by their hands, (as it was already plain that they had not much confidence in me,) or involve me in some outrage, my supposed share in which, would, at no distant day, give me to an ignominious death.

I had, then, but a choice of dangers. If I attempted to fly from the banditti, in the event of my falling into their hands again, I should have no mercy to expect ; but it was my sincere opinion, that, without giving any provocation, there was little chance of my surviving long in their society. Such being the view which I took of my present position, it required but a slight resolution to decide on attempting to escape.

While conversing with some of the gang, I took an opportunity of putting a few questions, the answers to which, I thought, might contribute to the successful execution of my plan, which was to make my way back to Sydney, if I could do no better, even at the risk of being restored to my wife. I, however, cherished a hope, that, on my way thither, I should meet with some one, who, in consideration of such reward as I could offer, might yet enable me to get to the coast.

The information which I obtained, was but scanty. The descriptions given of various places occasionally mentioned, were so confused and obscure, that I had little hope of being able to recognise, if I could manage to approach them. However, my situation was desperate—it became every day more intolerable, and death, which, in the event of a miscarriage, I concluded would be instantaneously inflicted, seemed to me not worse, than the misery inseparable from existence, protracted on the conditions, which were, at present, the only ones on which I continued to survive.

Delay, I thought, would be worse than useless, and, consequently, I made up my mind to retreat at once. Notwithstanding Lean Iniquity had repeatedly hinted, that he would not stay with the Bush Rangers, I took particular care to give him no intelligence of what I intended ; and on the day before my meditated departure, I used the precaution of avoiding him, except for a few minutes in the morning, altogether, and accompanied the banditti on an excursion into the woods, in quest of food.

It was evening when we returned. All but myself were much fatigued. With a view to my escape, I had seized every opportunity throughout the day for resting myself, by withdrawing from observation when I could ; and while the robbers thought me most active in pursuit of game, I was seated on the ground, without thought of rising, till their approach made it necessary.

A repast of roasted, or rather of scorched flesh, and biscuits, was prepared for us, on our return, of which I partook freely, not so much to appease present hunger, as with a view to

save myself, when on my projected journey, from a very early visitation of that sort.

With all the care which I had been able to take, in the course of the day, I found myself rather weary. I, however, persevered in my design, from the reflection, that my companions were much more exhausted than I was, and I might not soon again find myself possessed of the same comparative advantage over them.

Part of the meat which had been cooked, I secreted in my handkerchief, and having filled my pockets with biscuits, I ventured forth at night, when the Bush Rangers, worn out by the toils of the day, had composed themselves to sleep.

The animation supplied by the sense of danger, and a most anxious wish to emancipate myself from the horrid association into which I had been betrayed, enabled me to proceed with considerable expedition. I felt not fatigue, and could imagine no danger more appalling, than that of being forced to return to them.

I endeavoured to retrace the ground over which I had passed, with Rafferty and his

friends, not because I thought there was no danger in doing so, but because it appeared to me, that there was no other course to be pursued, that offered the slightest chance of future good. To travel in a different direction, was, as I believed, to plunge into a pathless wilderness, from which, I could have no chance of emerging, with life.

As nearly as I could, I adhered to the track which I had before traversed, and was so far fortunate as to hit on it, notwithstanding I was frequently much bewildered. Sometimes, I doubted whether I had done so, but before the fear consequent on such uncertainty had become very formidable, I recognised objects which had caught my attention before, and which assured me that I had not mistaken the way.

The morning was breaking when I found myself rather foot sore, and thought it would be prudent to rest awhile. To proceed, at that time, would be worse than useless, as my speed was now so much abated by the fatigue I had undergone, that it was impossible to doubt the result of any effort on the part of the Bush Rangers, to

overtake me, supposing them to have hit upon the track which I had ventured to pursue. To pause, therefore, and, if possible, to recruit my strength, was absolutely necessary to the successful prosecution of my design.

Having come to this conclusion, the next thing was to find a spot in which I might obtain some shelter from the weather, which was unluckily rainy, and have a chance of escaping observation, should any member of the brotherhood, from whom I had deserted, travel that way. A most inviting thicket presented itself. It seemed to have been recently occupied, as I now proposed to occupy it; for part of it had been cut away, so as to make a snug opening for a man, and some withered grass appeared to have been spread over the ground, as a substitute for a bed.

I was not sorry to find such unhoped-for accommodation, and hastened to take possession of it. While doing so, I mentally asked whether there might not be some chance of the last lodger returning, while I was in no state to question his intentions, or to defend myself

against him, if he should be hostilely disposed. But this thought was speedily dismissed, and the resting-place I had found was so grateful to my weary frame, that I could not persuade myself there was any serious danger connected with my temporarily reposing in it. I was fortunate enough to get several hours of sound refreshing sleep, which restored my strength so far, that I now felt myself more equal to the arduous task I had undertaken, than on the preceding night, when I commenced my solitary expedition. The weather had become fair, the sun was high in the heavens, and the heat was great. Notwithstanding this, I resolutely advanced. I felt little want of food. Occasionally I put part of a biscuit into my mouth, but experienced no wish for a substantial meal.

The afternoon was far advanced, when I deviated a little from what I supposed to be the right path, in order to climb a mound for the purpose of looking from its summit, if any human habitation were thence discernible. It was in vain that I did so. Nothing met my

eye, that could encourage a hope of speedily reaching any inhabited spot.

I descended the hill hastily on the other side, indeed the sloping declivity caused me to run, and had just reached the bottom, when I saw a person who had been reposing on one side, in its shade, start up with an appearance of infinite alarm.

“What’s the matter,” he exclaimed, “what are you going to do? You did not think I meant to run away, did you? Upon my soul it’s an accident! I lost my way—you see, I saw an opossum, so I thought I could kill it. Who’s with you, Bainbridge—what are you alone? What’s this mean?”

My surprise and confusion, were equal to that of the party from whom these incoherent exclamations proceeded, when I found that the speaker was no other than Lean Iniquity.

“Are you alone?” he again inquired, evidently with much anxiety.

“I am,” I replied.

“But you won’t take me back—you won’t mention having seen me.”

“ To the Bush Rangers ?”

“ Yes ; I say, you won’t *blow* me ?”

“ I hope I shall have no opportunity,” I said, “ of telling them any thing, as it is not my intention to return to them.”

“ Indeed ! I am very glad to hear it. But why didn’t you tell me you meant to *bolt* ? We could then have done the trick together. It might have been managed so much better, if I had only been *down* to your game. You know I spelt, but you would not read.”

To this I replied, that after the treatment I had experienced from him, he could hardly expect my confidence.

He declared, with the most vehement asseverations, that he had only studied my good in every thing. It had always been made out to him, that the Bush Rangers lived a very happy life, and wanted for nothing, and so he thought we might pleasantly spend a few weeks with them, till we could do better ; and again he declared, that in every case he had been my friend.

I, upon this, reminded him, of his having

robbed me of my money, by compelling me to divide it with him, under a threat of being denounced to the gang.

That, he protested, was done, solely for my benefit. As I was to pay for the horses, this being known to Rafferty from the first, the Bush Rangers, he had expected, would at his, (Rafferty's) instigation, have taken all ; and seeing he might expect to escape search, why he thought it would be better to save it for me, by taking it into his own possession.

“ You forget,” I said, “ the threats which you held out to me, to induce compliance.”

“ That,” he answered, “ was after you had doubted my honour. I never meant to wrong you of a farthing ; but if I had not taken care of it, I expected you would be robbed by the people of the bush.”

“ As that was the only object you had in view, and as there is no danger of the sort now to be apprehended, you can give it back again.”

“ I would do so with all my heart, but that rascal, Rafferty, robbed me of it all, just before I started.”

“ Of all ?”

“ Of every rag.”

“ Is this true ?”

“ To be sure it is—honour bright! Do you think I would tell you a lie ?”

“ I should tell you one, if I were not to answer, yes.”

“ I am sorry you have such an opinion of me.”

“ That may be very true ; and as you think you have some reason to complain, if you are at all to be credited, of my suspicions, I will enable you to remove them. Submit to be searched ; and if you are really without cash, I may feel inclined to believe you.”

“ O with all my heart. Search my pockets—every one of them.”

This offer seemed to me so fair, that it a little staggered me. While he made it, however, I observed him draw his left hand from one of them. It was closed, and I instantly suspected that my money was in it.

I told him what I had observed.

He assured me that I was wrong, in the inference which I had drawn.

“ Then open your hand.”

“ Then there,” said he, opening it. “ There is only my knife. Now are you satisfied?”

And certainly a large clasp-knife was all that I could see. I looked suspiciously on the ground, but saw nothing to make me question the truth of what he had told me.

But the evil opinion I had of him was so strong, that I could not help being of opinion that he had intended stabbing me with the knife, while I was engaged in searching his pockets. Under this impression I demanded the surrender of it.

“ What do you want with it?” he inquired.
“ You—you won’t murder me?”

“ I have no such intention. It is not my wish to deal hardly with you, but I much fear you have not intended me fairly. Give it up.”

He resigned it trembling, and with much reluctance.

“ And now,” said I, “ produce the money. It may, probably, never be of use to either of us; but even in that case, it may as well be with me as with you.”

“ I would with pleasure, if I had it. But look ; judge for yourself ; be satisfied.”

While speaking, he turned the insides of all his pockets outwards, so that I might see their contents. My notes were not forthcoming.

“ Now I hope you are content,” he said.
“ You see I told you the truth.”

“ I am not quite satisfied of that,” said I.
“ My recent experience has taught me that experienced villains, do not always think the pocket the safest place as the depository of their plunder.”

I put my hands on his coat ; he drew back and seemed disposed to shrink from the scrutiny.

“ You have seen my pockets turned inside out, and if you are not content now, I won’t be searched any more.”

His manner convinced me, that he had good reasons, for wishing to escape being further searched. I therefore did not think it necessary to use much delicacy with him, and accordingly informed him that I did not want to know what was his resolution, but I wished him to understand, that it was mine to ascertain, beyond all

doubt, whether or not he had tried to deceive me, and in the event of his offering resistance, to break his head.

“ What, are you going to take advantage of me,” he dolefully asked, “ now that I am alone ?”

“ No,” I replied, “ I am not going to do so, nor am I going to let you take advantage of me, now we are alone, as you did when you were supported by Rafferty and his gang of desperadoes.”

Finding that I was not to be moved, he at length allowed me to act as I pleased. It was not long before I perceived that the collar of his coat had more stiffening and substance, than was usually found in that part of such a garment. I instantly cut it open, and found my property, together with two fifty pound notes, which did not belong to me.

“ You are up to snuff,” said he, affecting jocular good humour. “ Well, give me back my own. You see I have taken good care of it for you.”

“ Yes you have.”

“ Give me my own back, any how.”

I handed him back the notes which had not been mine.

“ You perceive,” said he, “ I had stowed yours away, as carefully as I did my own.”

“ You did indeed.”

“ And now you must be sure, that I could not mean to cheat you in the end, as I had plenty without doing that.”

I made no answer.

“ Since this business is settled,” said he, “ and we are both runaways, let us now be good *pals*, and do our best to get out of the scrape we are in.”

I did not close very cordially with this proposition ; however, I questioned him as to what knowledge he had acquired of the country, and we went forward together.

As the night closed, I began seriously to consider what I should do with my companion. Though he now pretended friendship, I was convinced that if he once saw me asleep, he would be well disposed to prevent my ever waking again. That he had formed such a design I was fully persuaded, not only from the knowledge

which I had of his character generally, but from the pressing representations which he made to me, on the expediency of my taking a little rest, and the kind declarations which he often repeated, of his readiness to watch over me while I slept.

CHAPTER X.

My suspicions induce me to adopt a harsh course of proceeding towards my companion—He objects to a proposed interference with the liberty of the subject, but gives up his opposition—We are much alarmed by the approach of supposed enemies.

I AM afraid it may appear to some, that, bad as my companion might be, I was extravagantly suspicious in supposing him to have formed such a design, as I sincerely believed to be his. Whatever my friends may say on this subject, I had no doubt *then*, that he waited but for an opportunity to murder me, and I do not accuse myself now, of having wronged him.

His conduct proved, that he supposed me to have the same intentions with regard to him. Though he pressed me with an affectation of kindness, to sleep, while he would look out to warn me of approaching danger, he repeatedly

evinced the strongest suspicion of my movements.

He generally contrived to keep at some distance, and when, from the grass being somewhat abundant, or any other circumstance my footsteps were unheard, he looked round with trepidation ; and if he found that I was moderately close, he would bound from me, as he would have done from a tiger.

I felt much embarrassed how to act. Wretched as I was, and dreary as the prospect was before me, though I had often wished myself in the grave, I still clung to life with some degree of eagerness. I should, perhaps, have said, had a third person been present, that though I did not value existence, I was anxious not to fall by the malice of a villain ; but the truth, I believe, is, though it is hardly safe for the character of a broken hearted lover as I was, to state it, I was by no means well disposed to die at all.

If I required my companion to sleep, before I rested, I did not perceive that that would be of any advantage to me. It was not my purpose to deprive him eternally of the means of acting

with hostility, and I, therefore, concluded, that if I made such a proposal, and he should accept it, I could thence derive no safety. Sleep must soon come over me, in despite of every effort I might make to resist it, and when it did, I concluded that I must perish.

I thought of attempting to wear him out, by resolutely walking forward, till he should be exhausted ; but though I was decidedly the more powerful man, I was by no means certain, that my strength was equal to such a task. With all my grief, I had not wasted much ; and the miserable spectre, my companion, as he was not at all encumbered by the weight of flesh which he had to carry, was likely to beat me as a pedestrian.

To keep awake myself, till his eyes should be closed, then to rest, and again awake before him, was what I wished to do, but could not tell how to manage it.

If he slept, I was not sure that I could safely determine that he did so. By pretending to slumber, he might think to throw me off my guard ; and, should he honestly repose, I could

make no bargain with myself, if I did the same, to wake at the proper time to be earlier than him, which bargain I could have any good reason for believing, would be faithfully observed ; and as I have already stated, in the event of his opening his eyes first, I had fully made up my mind, that I should open mine no more.

Thus musing on what was proper to be done, I remained irresolute, but continued to advance. Lean Iniquity did the same ; but the sullen, ungracious reception which his friendly offers met with, had by this time reduced him to silence. I was sensible of great fatigue, and reflected that, at whatever risk, I must of necessity make a halt shortly. My increasing weakness, led me to fear, that I might soon lie wholly at the mercy of my companion, and it therefore suggested to me the expediency of promptly deciding to trust to his honour, or to endeavour to secure myself, by some means or other, against his treachery.

On a sudden, then, I made a full stop. He did the same, and inquired what I meant to do.

“It is useless to go further,” I said, “to-night.

We have no prospect of reaching a human habitation by encountering a few hours additional toil, and so I think it will be as well to pause at once."

"Why to be sure it will," Lean Iniquity replied. "Haven't I been wanting you to do so for the last three hours? Here is some good long grass, and a comfortable sheltering wood close at hand. One can sleep in safety, so the other keeps watch. You shall have the first sleeping-turn."

"Shall I?"

"And I will keep a good look-out."

"Will you?"

"To be sure I will; so now take to your bed at once."

"Before I do that," said I, "some little arrangement will be necessary. I must have good assurance, that you will not be too close to me while I rest."

"Too close to you—what do you mean?"

"In few words, I mean that I have no confidence in you, and am reluctant to trust my life in your hands."

This plain speaking, seemed to disconcert Lean Iniquity not a little.

“ Why, zounds !” said he, “ you—you—surely you don’t think I would commit a murder, do you ?”

“ You proposed once to join me in committing one, and that not long since.”

“ O ! but that was on a rascal, who was going to swindle us. Don’t be afraid of me. You will be quite safe, where I am, that I assure you.”

“ I have no doubt you will so assure me.”

“ I give you my word.”

“ I do not require it.”

“ Upon my honour.”

“ *Your* honour !” I disdainfully exclaimed.

“ So help me”— .

“ Spare yourself trouble. It is useless to mince the matter, and so I fairly tell you the word, the honour, and the oath of a person of your known character, can weigh nothing with me. You, I believe, have designs on my life, and probably you suspect me of a like feeling towards you.”

“ Oh no ! I never had such a thought.”

“ If that be the case, you will perhaps have little objection, to give me the security I am about to require, that you will not assassinate me while I sleep.”

“ What security can I give ?”

“ That of submitting to have your hands tied, that I may rest satisfied you have not the power to harm me.”

“ You can’t ask such a thing as that, Bainbridge !”

“ I admit the demand to be a little unpolite and somewhat extraordinary,” I said, “ but my situation is extraordinary. Chance has thrown us together, and if I had been a stranger to you before, what has occurred even this day, would have taught me that you were not to be believed.”

“ But why should you wish me to have my hands tied ?”

“ That requires no explanation.”

“ Consider of how much more use I could be, with them unbound. Suppose some wild beast should approach”—

“ No matter.”

“ Or the brown, or the yellow serpent.”

“ I will take the chance of that.”

“ Consider now, a serpent may come, and coil himself round your limbs and body, and kill you before I can wake you to assist yourself. There are hundreds of them.”

“ Very true.”

“ While, if my hands were at liberty,” Lean Iniquity continued, “ I could fly to your assistance, and destroy the monster so suddenly, as to prevent him from doing you any harm.”

“ That is certainly possible, nevertheless with the knowledge I have of you, I prefer braving the most venomous hostility of all the formidable reptiles which infest these wilds, to sleeping under your protection, and at your mercy.”

I confess that this language was not the most conciliating in the world, and I was conscious of it at the time I used it, but in matters of business, there is nothing like speaking to the purpose.

But though I stated something to this effect,

to Lean Iniquity, in order to prove how extremely reasonable that proposition was, which I had done myself the honour to submit to him, with less waste of words, than is common with most negotiators, who treat on matters of life and death, he was not satisfied, and refused most perversely, to favour me with his assent.

So then I was obliged to try another argument. I told him the feelings with which we found ourselves mutually inspired, were such, that one must give way to the other.

He admitted that very fairly, and proposed that I should do so to him.

“ No,” said I, “ you know what my resolution is on that subject, so unless you chuse to submit to what I think necessary, we must come at once to a trial of strength. If I am to die, I had rather lose my life in fair strife, than submit to be butchered in cold blood. Refuse longer to be temporarily placed out of a state to do mischief, and I shall not hesitate to use my best endeavours to disable you for ever, so make your choice.”

“ Nay, but”—

“ No delay.”

“ But is it fair ? ” he demanded, and he appeared desirous of entering upon a new course of expostulation.

I cut the matter short, and peremptorily ordered him to hold his tongue, or give his consent in one word.

“ But I can’t consent,” he said.

“ Do you refuse then ? ” I inquired.

He was silent.

“ At once submit,” I said, and I spoke with sternness, “ or take the consequences. Give me no answer but yes or no, or I shall use but a word and a blow, and the blow will perhaps have precedence.”

While thus speaking, and, indeed, through the whole of our last conversation, I presented myself to him in the attitude of one expecting to be attacked, and prepared with a formidable bludgeon to attack in turn. Fighting was not his favourite exercise, and, with tears, he, in the end, submitted to that thraldom, on which I believed the continuance of my own life to depend. I secured his hands, first with string, and afterwards with my handkerchief, in such a

way that I was persuaded he could not loosen them. His helpless and deplorable aspect, while this was doing almost moved me to pity.

“ Now,” said I, in a soothing tone, “ since you cannot harm me, I will prove that you need not fear for yourself. Not only will *I* do you no wrong, but should danger appear in any shape, I will instantly come to your assistance, and defend your life, as I would my own.”

He was a little re-assured by my manner, but complained of being hardly used, as he had never, for a moment, thought of doing me any injury.

To this I replied, I had good reason to believe the contrary was the truth, and it was better to say no more about it.

I then stretched myself at the root of a tree, in order to rest my weary limbs, having first cautioned Lean Iniquity not to approach me rashly. I charged him to call to me by my name, if he found it necessary to come very near me, for if I should wake and find him by my side, I should judge most uncharitably of his purpose, and act accordingly.

“ Be careful,” said I, “ how you act while you suppose I sleep ; if you steal on me in silence it must be for some treacherous purpose ; and should I have cause to accuse you of any new treachery, I will kill you with as little ceremony as I would use towards a viper.”

I then sought rest, but started once or twice at hearing, as I thought, footsteps coming towards me. There was no cause for such alarm, that I could discover on looking round.

Lean Iniquity had seated himself while I was speaking, and he remained in the same position he had first taken. I was indeed inclined to think that he was half asleep.

I sunk down with more tranquillity than before. Relieved from momentary alarm, I was about to sleep, when I heard the voice of my companion.

“ Bainbridge ! Bainbridge !” Lean Iniquity called out, with much eagerness of manner.

I started up, and saw him on his feet. He had not advanced towards me, and his hands were as I had left them. In a word, I disco-

vered nothing, that could lead me to think he was attempting any new deception.

“ What is the matter ?” I demanded.

“ We are not alone,” said he. “ I have heard footsteps more than once.”

“ And so have I,” said I; “ at least I thought so.”

“ I am quite sure of it,” he replied; “ and more than that, I heard voices just before I called to you.”

“ Indeed ! Then perhaps we are near the haunts of some of the natives.”

Lean Iniquity said that might be the case, but he rather thought the sounds were not like theirs. He believed them to be those of Englishmen. “ The Bush Rangers have followed us !” he exclaimed. “ We are lost !”

“ A few minutes,” I remarked, “ would probably remove all doubt on this subject at least.”

“ But as you cannot sleep now, won’t you untie my hands ?”

“ If there is danger of any attack, I will instantly do so.”

“ Listen,” said he.

I listened, but heard no sound then like that which I expected to hear, though at the moment he spoke, I fancied that some one called to another at a distance.

Our suspense was soon ended. Voices were heard, and at no great distance.

I now judged it but right to restore to my companion the free use of his hands. Before this simple operation could be completed, the sounds were renewed, and those from whom they proceeded, were evidently drawing nearer. We could not yet distinguish words, except in a single instance, when one exclamation reached us so entire, that we were convinced the parties who had filled us with sudden apprehension, could at any rate swear in English.

CHAPTER XI.

I ascertain who the parties are, by whom I had been disturbed, and receive information calculated to give me new alarm—We get extricated from our present difficulties, but I am threatened with future evil—Lean Iniquity, in consequence of the change in our circumstances, makes a proposition to me, which meets with but an ungrateful reception.

ALL was silent again, and neither I nor my companion could in any way account for what we had heard.

In this state of uncertainty, to sleep was out of the question. What was best to be done, I could not determine. To go towards the part whence the sounds proceeded, was to brave the danger of falling into the hands of the Bush Rangers, whom both Lean Iniquity and myself suspected to be the parties we had heard, and whom we supposed to have come thus far, in pursuit of us.

I was by no means content to throw myself into their power, but to retreat, in my then crippled and exhausted state, so as to get beyond their reach, was almost impossible, and to remain stationary, was, so it struck me, nearly the same thing as surrendering.

While we were in this state of suspense, an immense blaze illuminated a distant part of the wood. Confused sounds again reached us, and my companion said, he was sure he could distinguish the voice of *Curly Dick*, one of our late associates.

The weather had again become rainy, and enough of the wet fell on us through the trees, to make us envy our neighbours, who enjoyed the solace of a comfortable fire. I finally came to the resolution of endeavouring, by a close survey, to ascertain beyond all doubt, whether our apprehensions were well founded, and this I announced to Lean Iniquity.

He admitted that it might be a good thing, to know something more of those who had alarmed us; but he added, “ for my own part I have no doubt of our being *dished*. I am sure the fel-

laws of *the bush* have given chace to us, and mean to *pay us* for leaving them."

" I can hardly think it possible," said I, " for them to have been so quick in their motions. They could not have suspected us of deserting them, the moment we were missing."

" My going first, and you following so quickly, looked suspicious. They knew my friendship for you."

" Indeed !"

" And of course concluded that we were gone off together."

" I am still at a loss to account for their being so much on the alert."

" O, as to that, when they think one of their gang means to turn *snitch*, I know they stick at nothing to catch him again, and hang him as soon as he is caught."

" Is that the law of the *Bush Rangers*?"

" Always. If they lay hold of us now, in less than half an hour, we shall dangle side by side from the branches of some of these trees."

The information thus imparted was not of the most cheering character. My early prejudices

still remained in such force, that I had a great distaste for the mode of exaltation, which my companion thought we had a good chance of obtaining, before we were an hour older.

I however adhered to my resolution, and prepared to satisfy myself who the parties were. A faint hope suggested to me, that possibly I might meet with Europeans, and even Englishmen, less desperate than the outlaws from whom I had attempted to fly, who might possess both the will and the power, to assist a being so forlorn and destitute as I was.

With cautious steps, I advanced towards the blaze, which was now greater than ever. Lean Iniquity, though he had feared to undertake this task, was equally afraid to remain alone, and came trembling behind me. We drew near the fire without being perceived. Our suspense was soon terminated, for we distinctly saw our late associates seated on the ground, with food in their hands, as if about to take their supper.

“Where the devil can they be?” cried one.

“They speak of us,” said Lean Iniquity.

“ We shall find them,” replied a voice which I instantly knew to be that of Rafferty.

“ There,” said my companion. “ They know which way we have gone. Let us take to our heels. We are dead men.”

“ I suppose,” said the first, “ they are together.”

“ No doubt,” Rafferty answered ; “ I did not see them go, but Lean Iniquity would not lose sight of *Charley the Swell*, (that was my name among them,) and they can’t be far off.”

“ We’re *done for*,” sighed Lean Iniquity. “ It’s all over with us. But let us run for it. Perhaps if we got into some of these trees, they would not see us.”

“ What, you have come at last, have you ?” cried one behind us, who having left the party at the fire before we drew near, was now returning with fuel to feed it.

Lean Iniquity closed his eyes, with an expression of horror, and a groan of despair.

“ I said you’d find your way well enough,” cried Curly Dick, for he it was who had sur-

prised us. “ *Sir Dag*, at the huts, directed you right, didn’t he ?”

I now perceived, that instead of their being in pursuit of us, we were supposed to have followed them by design, and I had just presence of mind enough to say,

“ O yes, the directions we got answered the purpose, you see, and here we are.”

Lean Iniquity revived at this, and confirmed what I had said.

“ But what did you go first for ?” Rafferty, who now came towards us, inquired.

“ An *opossum*, an *opossum*, ” cried my companion, who was then fast recovering. “ I run after one, and Charley followed me.”

“ *Sir Dag* told you then what had happened ?”

“ To be sure he did,” said Lean Iniquity, who now, that his fears were at an end, found his talent for trickery and lying fast returning. “ He told us exactly which way you would go, and I and Charley, not liking to be out of a good thing, set off as hard as we could budge, and a pretty jaunt we have had of it. However, I am

glad we have not missed the way, and that you are well provided with the *seran*," meaning by that provisions.

"Yes, you are always ready for that," *Curly Dick* remarked, "if for nothing else."

We then joined them, as if nothing particular had chanced. While I regretted that I had been unfortunate enough again to fall into their society, I experienced some comfort at having escaped the danger which menaced us when we were recognised.

Lean Iniquity was absolutely in raptures, to find that his life was in no present danger. A plentiful supper, a large fire, and a shed to sleep beneath, for one had here been erected by the Bush Rangers, were comforts on which we had not calculated, and were something even in my estimation, as the night, before chill and damp, had now become stormy.

By degrees we found out what they supposed we had learned at the huts, namely, that news had been received of Blinking Harry, who had partly recovered, but being still weak, proposed staying at a place which he indicated about

thirty miles in advance of the dwelling at which he had, in the first instance, remained. Thither he wished a party to proceed, for the double purpose of escorting him home, and attempting a robbery, which had been sometime before resolved upon.

In consequence of this, it was settled that those who had lately returned to Hunter's River, strengthened by the addition of Rafferty, Lean Iniquity and myself, should set out for the purposes above specified.

I was even after this explanation much amazed, at their having been able to use such disparte \downarrow , as fairly to outstrip Lean Iniquity and myself, greatly as we, in dread of being pursued, had exerted ourselves. My wonder abated when I learned, that our occasional deviations from the right track, had doubled the distance from the robbers' head-quarters, and the point I had arrived at with so much difficulty, after travelling a day and a night, the Bush Rangers had reached with ease, in less than eight hours.

The rain fell in torrents all that night, and continued to do so for several succeeding days,

so much so, that we could not move forward. Our situation became very uncomfortable. It was no easy thing to keep up our fire, and we began to fear a scarcity of food.

Rafferty, during this period, made a great show of alacrity, boasting desperately of the bold things he would do ; and Lean Iniquity repeated for himself, most of the intrepid speeches uttered by his friend. I was ashamed to take them up after they had done with them, and could not invent any thing of the kind for myself, which I thought it prudent to trust my tongue with. I said little, but endeavoured to throw a look of fierce determination into my countenance, that I might not be accused of feeling, as I did, violently indisposed to act with them on any occasion, or in furtherance of any of their views.

I believe it was on the second day of our residence here, that Lean Iniquity thought it right to recur to our late financial transactions, and was pleased to hint, that the money which I had recently withdrawn from his keeping, must now, since we were again among the Bush Rangers, be handed over to him.

I was not of his opinion.

“ Because,” he said, “ the claim which I had lately urged, that we were alone, and that, therefore, it would be more convenient for me to carry the whole, held good no longer.”

I could not deny that circumstances were changed ; but I did not feel at all disposed to act as he recommended, on that account.

He argued, very earnestly, and at some length, no one else being within ear-shot, that that was fair which he required.

To judge from his manner, he fully expected that I should be convinced nothing in the world could be more modest, just, and proper, than his demand.

I was still unmoved, and obstinately deaf to all he could say.

His temper was a little ruffled by my inflexibility ; and he could not help telling me, in a reproachful tone, that such conduct was unfair.

“ Fair or foul,” I scornfully replied, “ I am not going to trust you with my property.”

“ Then,” said he, “ remember what I told you before. It shall all be *grabbed*.”

“ All ?”

“ Every *mag* of it, that you may take your *bibler* of. Hand over my share, or bid it all good bye.”

“ I would throw it into the fire before you shall touch any portion of it again. Now do your worst ; but before you speak to your bush friends about my having money about me, make up your mind to get a Rowland for your Oliver.”

“ A what ?”

“ Make up your mind to have them told of the notes you carry about with you, and which you pretend are your own. Now tell them what you think proper ; I shall at least have the pleasure of making you pay for your villainy.”

This hint silenced Lean Iniquity ; and as on a careful calculation, I found that he had considerably more to lose than to gain by betraying me, I was quite satisfied that he would hold his peace ; for I gave him my most solemn assurance, that should any accident discover to the BushRangers that I had money about me, I should instantly place the mischance to his account,

and at once disclose what I knew of his present condition.

I thus effectually secured him. He would not, I was quite certain, trust what he had out of his own possession, so as to enable him to submit to be searched ; and no one but him, knew that I had brought from Sydney, more than was enough to pay for the horses. That fact, Lean Iniquity had concealed even from Rafferty, doubtless because he was not willing to allow him to participate in the spoil, of which, from the first, he had resolved to plunder me.

CHAPTER XII.

The Bush Rangers re-cross Hunter's River, lose their way, and experience much distress—Reduced to a state of starvation, they entertain a horrid proposition, which I oppose, but without success—My death is resolved upon.

THE weather at last improved, and the Bush Rangers advanced, in pursuance of their previously formed scheme. When we reached Hunter's River, I was amazed to see how immensely it was swollen, since I formerly approached it, in consequence of the late rains.

This unlooked-for change in its aspect, proved not only an inconvenience in the first instance, as we had to ford it, or swim across, but was productive of great annoyance at that time, and of signal disaster in the sequel.

The whole face of the country was so changed, that an old Bush Ranger, one Daniel Watson,

who undertook to direct our proceedings, was deceived as to the point at which we ought to have crossed it. When, miserably wet, we had scrambled through it, he told us, that in about an hour and a half, we should get to a cottage where we could dry our garments and get refreshments, as well for the present day, as for the rest of our journey. This promise was so far from being realized, that after a fatiguing march of five hours, we still saw nothing of the promised resting-place. For a time, he obstinately maintained that he had made no mistake in the road; and though the distance was greater than he had supposed, we should still find that he was right in the main. It however soon became obvious to us all, that Watson had lost his way, and he reluctantly admitted it himself. We then endeavoured to return to the river, but the attempt was unsuccessful; and we marched despondingly forward, without being able to form the slightest conjecture, as to what place we might eventually expect to reach.

Our stock of food was now brought very low. We had but a few biscuits remaining, and these

had been almost spoiled by the immersion of the bag which contained them in the river, while the bearer of it was endeavouring to cross it. These were now pretty fairly divided. When this was about to be done, Lean Iniquity was nimble enough with his fingers to purloin one unperceived. In his hurry, he slipped it into his pocket, but did it so hastily and imperfectly, that a few moments afterwards, it fell on the grass. I happened to be close behind him, when this happened, and for once, profited from his dishonesty, by picking it up, and depositing it within my waistcoat.

We continued our march, till fatigue compelled us to halt. Our clothes had by this time nearly dried on our backs. We slept in them, and in the open air, for no shelter of any kind could we obtain beyond that which a tree or a bush might offer.

The next morning saw us in the same wretched state, with this addition, that hunger now tortured all but myself. I, sustained by the biscuit which Lean Iniquity had stolen, experienced as yet, no serious inconvenience from hunger,

though what I already felt within, told with sufficient distinctness, that such annoyance might speedily be expected. I, however, husbanded the biscuit, with such care, and consumed it so slowly, partly from despair of obtaining a new supply of food, when that was gone, and partly because I could only venture to introduce a morsel of it to my mouth, when I was satisfied that the act could not be observed by any of my companions, that when the second day closed, I had still a small portion of it remaining.

The nourishment this afforded me, though by no means all that I could have desired, enabled me to make a very fine display of fortitude, and I accordingly spoke more than once in praise of that virtue, and on the importance of displaying courage, and bearing like men, those privations which we could not escape.

My eloquence, was treated with as little respect as that of other men commonly calls forth, when they venture to speak in favour of any virtue, which it is easier to preach about than to practise. In my case, thanks to the biscuit which Lean Iniquity had stolen, the preceptor was

enabled to exhibit some of the patience, which he took upon himself to recommend to others.

But when a third day had opened upon us, and brought no relief, the wretchedness and desperation of my miserable companions became most deplorable. I now sympathised with them very sincerely, while I saw them seeking sustenance from the roots of bushes, and anxiously pursuing the most odious reptiles for the purpose of devouring them.

Watson wore a jacket made of the skin of the kangaroo. In expiation of the fatal error which he had committed, by crossing the river at the wrong place, this garment was now to be sacrificed to our hunger. It was accordingly torn into small pieces, and each had a portion of it.

So wretched a substitute for food, proved of considerable service, and did not wholly fail us till two additional days had elapsed, without effecting any change in our situation or prospects.

It was then that Rafferty remarked, “ we were fools to go on so. In a day or two more, we must all die, and so, he thought it would be

better that one should be put out of his misery, to furnish food for the rest."

The others remarked upon this proposition, that they did not know what else they could do. It was certainly better that one should perish immediately, than that all should be starved to death.

While they spoke I thought they looked at me, as if they considered that I was the individual who ought to be slaughtered for the general good. To say the truth, I felt at that moment that I might consider myself the most tolerable specimen of live stock there to be found, and I really think it was not personal vanity, which suggested the idea.

I did not hear so horrid a proposition, without raising my voice against it. According to present appearances I said, "all of us must in a few days appear before the Almighty, and, I therefore would advise, that we should not add to our other crimes, the wilful destruction of a fellow-creature, and hoped, at least, that we should go to our last account, with hands unstained with blood."

In answer to this, I was coarsely told that I

might as well hold my *jaw*, for it was of no use preaching a sermon to hungry fellows like them.

This ungenteel reproof, disgusted me very much, and I indignantly replied, that they must act as they liked, but for my part, I would have nothing to do with the business.

“ But you will though,” replied Lean Iniquity. “ You shall take chance with the rest. We are not going to let you off, while we take the risk of dying ourselves, to save our friends.”

I replied, that “ I wanted none of the food, they proposed to obtain by such dreadful means, and consequently they had no right to include me at all in their scheme.”

“ That’s all stuff!” Rafferty remarked, “ you would like to look on without danger, and then, by and bye, perhaps, turn round upon us, and get us hanged for murder.”

This speech made a profound impression on the hearers, and it was unanimously voted that I, whether I consented to it or not, should take my chance with the rest.

Rafferty proposed that each should give some small article, which he would shake together in

his hands, and then throw them up, and he, whose piece fell away from the rest, should be the sacrifice.

This mode of proceeding, to which they had all been accustomed in the English skittle grounds, where they received their education, was much approved. Lean Iniquity gave in a knife as his representative. He seemed in rather good spirits, considering the awful situation in which we all stood, and I saw him wink, almost waggishly, to the others.

When they called on me to furnish something to be hustled by Rafferty, I flatly refused to comply. Lean Iniquity, then stood my friend, and gave in a button as my piece. This was duly notified to me by Watson, who called out to me “that the button was mine, and I must look after it, to see that there was no cheating.”

Having stationed himself on a vacant spot of ground, Rafferty, holding his hands together, proceeded to shake the articles within, and this ceremony performed he threw them up. Five or six of them fell nearly together, but it so happened that the button which was to be consi-

dered as mine, separated from the rest, and came down nearly two yards distant from them.

It was quite clear to me, that this was no more than had been confidently expected, and, indeed, previously determined, and it was impossible to doubt that the button had been made to fall as it did, by some manœuvering on the part of Rafferty, when tossing the pieces.

Though I had long since been cured of any unreasonable fondness of life, yet to be slaughtered by ruffians, was a mode of death, which I should at no time have preferred, and which certainly, was not rendered less unpalatable to me, by the base fraud which had been practised. I therefore remonstrated against their injustice, and said, they could not expect me to submit quietly to my fate, under such circumstances.

To this, they gave me a very pithy answer. "If," they said, "I did not choose to submit to it quietly, I might submit to it noisily, but, in any case, I should submit."

They, one and all, affected to think, that it was very unhandsome on my part, to object to being killed for dinner, and Rafferty added to

the intimations of such a feeling, which I had just heard, that “ since I had kicked up all this row, it should be the worse for me. If I had kept a civil tongue they might have allowed me half an hour to prepare myself, while they made a fire to cook me, but, since I had been so free with my *gab*, they would settle my business at once.”

CHAPTER XIII.

Rafferty proceeds to execute his threat—An unlooked-for interruption prevents its full completion—I am again left alone, but soon fall into other hands—My circumstances are suddenly changed—I am treated with great respect and kindness at Sydney, from which place, I again take my departure.

AND the resolution so frankly communicated, Rafferty proved he was quite prepared to carry into effect. I believed my last moment to have arrived, when, looking mournfully round, I saw that all concurred in what he was about to do, and Lean Iniquity's hungry countenance, seemed illuminated with ferocious hope—springing, not merely from raging hunger, but from lust for vengeance, and unquenchable avarice, both of which, as he expected, would be gratified by my death.

“ It's no use making a piece of work about

it," cried Rafferty. " You know you lost the toss."

He approached me while he spoke. I started backward, and demanded, .

" Are you vile enough to slaughter a man in cool blood ?"

" None of your nonsense," he replied. " It won't do. You must *go*, so it don't signify talking. Better one than all."

" Then," said I, " if you will have my blood, some of you shall pay for it."

And, snatching a club, carried by Watson, I gave its proprietor a blow, which, though it fell on his shoulder, knocked him down, but which, had it taken effect as I intended, on the head, would perhaps have procured me a respite, by affording them, in his person, a sufficient supply of food for the present.

As it was, he instantly recovered his feet; but while he was doing so, I made a blow at Lean Iniquity, which he avoided, and the desperate fury with which I struck, in the absence of the expected resistance from the object aimed at, caused me to lose my footing, and spin quite round.

Watson then seized me from behind, throwing his arms round my waist. Lean Iniquity grasped one arm, and the others rushing on me at the same time, I was rendered completely powerless. I struggled still, but the fiercest effort I could now make, only inflicted a kick or two on the shins of my assailants, who promptly tripped up my heels, and brought me to the ground, in a sitting posture. Here I was firmly held, and Rafferty standing before me, grasping the barrel of a large pistol in his hand, lifted up the stock of it to knock me down.

At that moment, a shot was heard. The sound filled my companions with great emotion, but did not prevent the blow from being delivered. The end of the pistol fell like a hammer on my skull, and I could see and hear no more.

Stunned by the violence of the blow, I lay, to all appearance, dead. How long I remained in a quiescent state, I can only guess from circumstances which afterwards came to my knowledge, and which lead me to conclude, that three quarters of an hour must have elapsed, before I perfectly recovered my senses. On re-

covering, I found myself quite alone ; I had no means of judging which way my late companions had fled, nor by whom they were pursued. By degrees, however, I was enabled to recall what had passed, up to the time when the report of the musket was heard.

I mechanically walked forward, I could not tell why. Raging hunger, soon compelled me to seek for food, but all that I could find, which appeared to be eatable, was some nettle tops, peppermint, and grass.—I chewed and swallowed these. They abated, in a slight degree, the painful cravings which I had felt, but conveyed no nourishment to my exhausted frame, and sinking from positive weakness on the damp grass, as the night closed in, I could not help regretting the accident which had prevented Rafferty from accomplishing his brutal purpose, by terminating my sufferings with my life.

I remembered, in those sad moments, that there had been others in which my situation appeared most desperate, and had, on a sudden, been changed. “ But what change,” thought I,

“can chance or fortune, and I was almost tempted to add, Heaven itself, effect, that would materially improve my condition!”

The same desponding thoughts, retained full possession of my mind, when another dismal morning opened upon me, and found me still traversing the pathless wild, without fear, as no imaginable occurrence could greatly aggravate my distress, and without object, as I could not propose to myself the attainment of any good, by going forward, or by turning back, any more than by remaining where I was.

I continued slowly to advance, for several hours, when, on a sudden, a human voice burst on my ear from behind, and, on looking round, I saw a native—a man of colour, who was evidently in pursuit of me. He spoke, and, as I conjectured, gave some command, but I could not understand what he said. From his gestures, I concluded that he desired me to approach. Too feeble in body, too broken in spirit, to think of resistance, I attempted to move towards him. He drew himself back with an air of defiance, and a wooden lance hurled with great force, from

another piece of wood which he held in his hand, struck me on the breast. Weak as I was, I could not sustain the shock, but fell prostrate on the grass. My assailant came instantly to me, relieved me from the incumbrance of my coat and waistcoat, put my hat on his head, and having tied my hands securely, he with many menaces, which were in some measure thrown away on my ignorance, as I could not guess their exact purport, made me distinctly to comprehend, that I must follow him.

I attempted to do so, but my movements not corresponding with his ideas of proper expedition, he at length intimated that it was his pleasure to permit me to precede him. Having conceded to me this honour, he soon showed me that he knew what exertion I was equal to, better than I did myself, for the occasional application of the point of his lance, with which he had previously wounded me, enabled me to go forward much faster than I had thought I could move by any possible exertion. The process I cannot say was remarkably agreeable, but it shortened the period of my sufferings, as in less than an

hour, by this judicious contrivance, he succeeded in driving me to a human habitation, and I recognised it, as the one which Blinking Harry had intended to rob, on the night when he received his wound.

Here I met with a reception on which I had little calculated, and found my situation in a moment, most singularly unlike what it had been, and what I had expected it would be.

On entering the garden, or fore court, of the house, I saw two or three soldiers, and was thence led to conjecture, that Blinking Harry and his accomplices were after all right, in supposing that a party of the military had been stationed there. I was led into the parlour, and here the moment I got in, an officer, whose manner and appearance were gentlemanly in the extreme, advanced to welcome me, and took me very cordially by the hand. Then pointing to the wound in my breast, which bled through the remains of my shirt, he sternly reprimanded the man who had brought me there; at the same time ordering the instant restoration of my clothes. With like promptness he directed re-

freshments to be placed before me, but cautioning me against partaking of them too freely, after the long abstinence from nourishment, which had been forced upon me.

Then, in few words he proceeded to inform me, that two days after I had left Sydney, letters were received from England, which stated the parties concerned in the outrage for which I was transported, had been subsequently convicted of another offence, and their dying confession, corroborated by other circumstances, had completely exculpated me. In consequence, a free pardon had been sent out, and I was from that moment, at liberty to return to England. He added, the wretches, he and his men had surprised when they were about to assassinate me, had been secured, and sent handcuffed to the barracks at Wallace's plains. One only had contrived to escape, and that one, on inquiry, I learned was Lean Iniquity.

While the soldiers were occupied in capturing and securing Rafferty and his fellows, they had not thought of me, and when at length they returned to the place where I had been, it was

found that I had managed to crawl away, and they sought for me in vain. It then occurred to him, to avail himself of the assistance of the native by whom I had been so roughly treated. The man only understood that he had to track me, and to bring me in alive, and in performing this duty, any thing like tenderness he judged would have been superfluous.

I could not hear such intelligence, without feeling some satisfaction, at learning that my character was at last vindicated, in a manner that must prove most consoling to my friends; but I bitterly lamented that the tidings had not reached me sooner. “O, what rapture would this be,” thought I, “but for my wretched—wretched union with Fan Dabsley!” and I indulged my melancholy by uttering this sentimental reflection aloud.

The emotion caused by this alteration in my present condition, and future prospects, though miserably damped by the unhappy circumstance which was ever uppermost in my mind, was still too much for me, in my then exhausted state, and, added to the wounds I had received from

Rafferty and the Black, threw me into a fever, which for more than a fortnight, was expected to terminate fatally.

In the course of that time, I was removed to Windsor, and lodged at the Macquarry Arms, where every attendance which my situation required was supplied. My restoration was gradually effected, and at the end of six weeks from the time of my capture, I found myself once more in health.

At this time I learned that a ship was about to proceed from Sydney to England, and also that my wife was on the point of coming to Windsor. I of course determined to leave the last-mentioned place without delay.

At Sydney, I was received with great kindness by the Governor, who I found had been written to by Mr. Haversham, and at his instance, by persons of official consequence, concerning me. He condoled with me on the unmerited sufferings I had experienced, and congratulated me with much warmth on their termination. Through his kind interference, I was accommodated with an excellent birth in the

ship, which was then about to sail from the colony.

He showed me, in the few days I remained there, many civilities, and my wife having actually set out for Windsor, as the ship was likely to sail before she could return, he very good-naturedly promised at an early period to take her case into his serious consideration, with a view to the remission of her sentence. He wished, to contribute to my comfort as much as he could, and would, he caused it to be intimated, so arrange, if possible, that she might soon follow me to England.

“ An odd way that, of contributing to my comfort,” thought I.

The ship was under weigh, when I received this well-meant communication, but in the midst of the bustle which prevailed, I did not fail to write to the Governor to express my gratitude for all past favours, and to say with respect to his last kind offer, that obliged as I had been by his humane attention in other instances, I could not for a moment, being so much indebted to him for myself, think of troubling him on be-

half of my wife, and I must insist upon it, that he should give himself no further concern about me.

This communication, I flattered myself, would prove to his Excellency, that I was a person of good breeding ; and I will say, the sincerity of my last considerate hint, was fully equal to its politeness.

CHAPTER XIV.

I arrive in England—Am kindly received by my mother, who had become very fashionable in my absence—She teaches me how to be cheaply genteel, and economically liberal.

WHILE on my voyage, my mind was almost wholly occupied with thoughts of Adela, and of the course which it would become me to take when I arrived in England. I reflected with anguish on the disappointment which I flattered myself my faithful mistress would have to sustain, when the joy which I was sure she must have felt at my restoration to character, and to my native country, should have to give way to the grief, or scorn, which must follow the announcement of the fact, that I had become the husband of another.

Sometimes I felt inclined to conceal my misconduct, by going to America, and leaving her

in perfect uncertainty as to my fate. But this I thought would be to inflict pain, quite as severe, as any that she could feel from being accurately informed of what had taken place. I tried to persuade myself, that I should be glad to find she had acted on the advice contained in my letter, and exult if I beheld her the happy wife of another. But after all my best efforts to bring my mind to this, the feeling which I anticipated would grow on the realization of such a hope, was not very unlike despair.

The resolution to which I ultimately came, was to venture into her presence once more. Then, I proposed to explain to her, or to her father, the miserable imposition which had been practised on me, implore forgiveness for the involuntary sin, and withdraw with the determined resolve never to see her again.

Such were my feelings, while returning to England, mingled, let me add, with some of a less amiable, or at least less pacific character; for when I remembered that but for the treachery of Lean Iniquity, I might then have been assured of knowing the greatest happiness to

which a mortal could aspire, I was tempted to execrate that miscreant aloud ; and from my heart I lamented the good fortune which had been his, as before I quitted Sydney it was known that he had succeeded in finding his way to the coast, and in getting on board a merchant ship which had sailed, and that too in less than a week from the time, when he was last seen by me.

Contrary winds, succeeded by dead calms, made our voyage tedious, so much so, that it was nearly seven months from our leaving Sydney, before we reached Portsmouth.

The joy which I should have experienced in again setting my foot on English ground, was annihilated by the melancholy reflections which came over me, while my thoughts rested on the humiliating confession which was due to Mr. Haversham and Adela. With an aching heart, I set out for London, resolved to make some inquiries respecting my friends at the Priory, of Mr. Hill, before I again presented myself to them.

I reached London about half-past nine at

night. It appeared but right in the first place, to make my mother acquainted with my safe arrival. Accordingly, I directed my steps to the well-known abode of my father-in-law. The sound of music in the first floor, greeted my ear as I approached, and I heard distinctly what I thought, from the liveliness of the strain, must be a comic song.

At first, I suspected, that I had made a mistake in the house; next that my mother and Mr. Mason had removed, or let out their apartments to merry lodgers, instead of to "*serious people*," which they had formerly affected to prefer. But I soon recollect ed myself, so far as to feel that it was foolish to indulge in any of these conjectures. I recollect ed that before I left England, the Rev. Hosea Jokington, having discovered that it was a shame to let "the devil have all the good tunes," had already recovered from his satanic majesty, half the jolliest Irish melodies, and transferred them to hymns, and I thought it not improbable that by this time he might have done as much for "*The little far-*

thing rush-light," " I was the boy for bewitching 'em," and " Whack row de dow."

However, I entered, and found my mother in the midst of a crowd of people. She had a fine turban on her head, and beautiful ringlets, that would not have disgraced the countenance of a girl of sixteen, gracefully arranged on her forehead, and I found that all this splendour was to celebrate Miss Mason's birth-day, who having completed her twentieth year, my mother had invited the multitude which filled her house, as "a few friends to hear a little music."

My appearance was not exactly in accordance with that of the rest of the company, for besides that my face, bronzed by exposure to the weather, was almost of the colour of mahogany, I wore a black neckcloth, and boots, and my clothes, which were not of the best, were covered with the dust, which I had accumulated on my route from Portsmouth to the capital.

My mother was delighted to see me; but Miss Mason was evidently scandalised, at the intrusion of so uncouth a figure as I was. She

and her sisters, on that account, were somewhat distant, and did not struggle through the crowd, to embrace me as my mother did.

I was perhaps wrong thus to intrude, for as one of the main objects of the affair, was to show off the girls, the scheme was certainly in danger of being defeated, by the entrance of so unpromising a personage as I must have been considered. However, Miss Mason recovered herself as well as she could ; and having seated herself at the piano, she waited to be asked to sing ; and then, as nobody had benevolence enough to prefer a request of that sort, she began a song unasked. My mother told me the next day, she could not at all account for the rudeness on the part of her company, in thus omitting to ask her to sing. I could. It seemed to me very easy to guess why she was not solicited. The gentry there, had heard her before.

The young lady went on, till she was tired, which was not till after every body else was ; and some who had not thought it worth while to listen while the performance continued, applauded very fervently when it concluded.

I was pleased with the end of it.

One gentleman who had great musical taste, cried up Miss Mason as a miracle of vocal excellence.

I laughed, for the poor girl's inefficient pipe, was quite incapable of any thing like an approach to harmony.

The gentleman who praised the song so excessively, observed the expression of my countenance, and whispered in my ear, the next moment, that he saw I agreed with him, and would as soon hear a pig squeak, as Miss Mason sing.

He did not know then, that I was a relation. His remark I thought excessively coarse; but he was not altogether wrong in his estimate of my critical judgment, though the singer was my sister.

I soon betook myself to a neighbouring tavern, and saw no more of my mother till the following day.

The scene and she were then wonderfully changed, and I found my mother in black, with a widow's cap on her head; and learned, for the

first time, that Mr. Mason had been dead more than seven months.

This surprised me; and I also expressed surprise at finding my mother as I had done, in the midst of such gaiety as I had witnessed on the preceding night.

To which she replied, that, it was necessary to do something to *get the girls off*; "for," she said, "going to chapel—I don't know what's come to the men—won't do now, as it did formerly; and so to be thought something of, one's obliged to give evening-parties."

"But the expense," I said, "must be considerable."

"Why no," said my mother, "if the thing is done carefully, a great show for people in middle circumstances, is made, at very little cost."

"How can that be?"

"Why, first of all, you ask five times as many people, as your house will accommodate."

"That must disappoint some, and make all uncomfortable."

"Of course; so three-fourths of the people

only show themselves, and then go away. You have thus the credit of inviting a score or two of persons to a fine entertainment, without the inconvenience of giving them any thing."

It struck me that there was a good deal in that; and I now began to understand, why such numerous invitations were sometimes given, in fashionable life. However, I remarked, that "to provide for the rest, must cost something."

" Not so much as you may think," said my mother. " Many get their tea before they come; and the rest, if you take care to have it nicely cold, as if it had just been bucketed out of a pond, won't drink much. As the evening advances, three pints of Cape Madeira, put into as many pailsful of warm water, with sugar, lemons, and nutmeg, will furnish a plentiful supply of excellent negus."

" But then the supper."

" Two fowls, each cut into five and twenty pieces, some slices of rancid ham, and, if you can get it, a nice musty neat's tongue for sandwiches, with three dozen stale penny tarts, which you may buy at the pastry-cook's in the morning for

half price, give you, for a few shillings, an elegant supper, for as many as you can squeeze in, and have health, strength, and contempt for heat and suffocation, to remain."

I plainly saw that my mother had got acquainted with some very grand people, while I was away, and must have been admitted to their intimate confidence, to have possessed herself of so excellent a recipe for giving a genteel evening entertainment, to a large party of fashionable friends. Had I thought of settling in England, I should certainly have entered it among my first household memoranda, for my own use.

My mother assured me that nothing on earth was so cheap, excepting, she added, a *conversazione*; and that, a friend of ours, Dr. Scoop, found better than any thing else, as he had only to borrow a few prints from the owner of a mock auction, some raggamuffin old paintings from a picture-broker, and the calf with two heads from Paddy O'Rare, the Bartholomew-fair showman, and there was enough to entertain all comers; and the man who acted the part of a servant, to mind the hats, cloaks, and great coats, paid for

the tea, out of the shillings and half-crowns which the visitors were expected to give as they went away.

Considering that my mother wore mourning, I thought myself rather fortunate, not to have arrived before the hysterics were over; but she was still very formidable. She tried my patience rather severely, by exerting her eloquence to lament Mr. Mason's decease; and to make me comprehend what a good creature he was, and what a happy thing it would be, if all who departed this transitory and imperfect state of being, were as sure of everlasting happiness as he was.

Such praise, was more than I could bear. I had always considered Mr. Mason to be a canting, selfish, hypocritical profligate; and when I remembered how my mother had formerly been in the habit of blaming his conduct, it was too much for my patience, though I flatter myself that few since Job, have been more largely endowed with that amiable quality, to hear his virtues, thus extolled; and I ventured to remark, that she had forgotten now, some of his back-

slidings, which she complained of not a little, while he was living ; and as an instance of this, I mentioned the little affair of Jenny.

As to that, my mother replied, Jenny was a good-for-nothing slut, and a great deal more to blame than my late father-in-law. She had always said that Jenny was an ungrateful hussey ; for though she had been glad to come at first for six guineas a-year, and her tea, my mother, of her own generosity, had, on her giving up the latter, raised her wages to eight pounds.

I knew that to be a favourite economical scheme of my mother's ; so I said rather sneeringly, that I believed she had not lost, and Jenny had not gained a vast deal, by an advance made under such circumstances ; and I put on a very significant look, as I usually do, when I say any thing that is humorous, or remarkably pointed.

My mother considered that I was laughing at her, and she always had a great objection to be laughed at. Her face, particularly her eyes, became stormy ; and I saw she was preparing to give me a sharp answer.

Accordingly, my mother told me, that she did not want any of my throwing off. The advance she had promised was not such a trifle; for when Jenny received the eight pounds, if she had been a good girl, though she engaged to find her own tea, it was always intended that she should have her master and mistress's pot, and that, as I must very well know, was a great thing.

I could say nothing to that, so I dropped the subject.

CHAPTER XV.

I leave my mother, and am lectured by my uncle Peter—I set out for the Priory, and meet with an old friend, who gives me some important information respecting others whom I had known, and induces me to change my intentions with respect to Adela.

IF ever by any chance it happened, that the stream of my mother's eloquence, was broken in upon by interruptions from others, she never failed to indemnify herself for the annoyance, by returning to the self-same subject over and over again. Such being her custom, as I had rashly interfered with her eulogium on Mr. Mason, she revenged herself, by recounting every tolerable action he had performed, and every pious speech he had uttered, in the course of his—according to my mother—saint-like career. She of course finished, in conformity with the established custom, by declaring, that he must be

in the enjoyment of unutterable bliss ; and then she shed tears of real anguish, so she said, on account of that mournful event, his death, which had been the means of introducing him to it.

Like *King Richard*, having “ a touch of my mother’s condition,”

“ Which could not brook the accent of reproof,”

I soon got excessively tired of hearing of the virtues of Mr. Mason, and considered my mother’s performance, which she repeated, as often as if it had been received “ with unbounded applause,” what is elegantly denominated “ *a perfect bore.*” I was prudent enough, since my mother would have it so, to admit that Mr. Mason was a most excellent man ; but this was not enough to satisfy the widow’s feelings. It is considered by some widows, I am told, a piece of decidedly good policy, to be for ever celebrating the virtues of a deceased husband, inasmuch as that is considered, a not ungraceful mode of proclaiming their own affectionate sensibility. These exercises, kept up as they were, in this case, would have driven me out of the

metropolis, or at least out of my mother's neighbourhood, had nothing else opposed my stay. I was however too anxious to hear of Adela, and her father, to delay my departure from London for a single day unnecessarily, even had it been possible to bind my mother over to keep the peace, so far as I was concerned.

But as that was quite out of the question, and as I felt that whatever I had to do with respect to my friends at the Priory, ought to be done without loss of time, I determined, be the pang which it would cost me what it might, not to hesitate.

My mother wished me to call on my uncle Peter, before I left town, and to please her, I saw the old gentleman.

He told me, that, he was glad to see me, but looked as if he did not require me to lose my time by waiting on him.

Tortured as I was in my mind, I have since been told my countenance was tolerably expressive of sorrow on that occasion, and offered, in fact, a finished specimen of the dismal.

My uncle Peter, from this circumstance, naturally concluded that I was pennyless, and of course found me very indifferent company.

I clearly saw that such was the case; and though I was in no humour to laugh at the mistake, I was too careless of what he might think, to make any effort to undeceive him.

In consequence of the impression which I have stated to have been made on his mind, my uncle thought it necessary to tell me, that “ notwithstanding his earnest wishes for my welfare, and his joy at seeing me in England, he felt some uneasiness on my account, as in such times as these, there was little good to be done at home; and if I had known when I was well off, I should have stayed where I had lately been.”

“ My duty to others,” I told him, “ rather than any view to my own interest, had induced me to return.”

He said it was very affectionate in me, to think so much of my relations; but he believed they were all too reasonable, and too well affected towards me, to wish me to hinder myself from

getting forward, that they might have the happiness of seeing me again.

And then he thought it right to enlarge upon the hardness of the times, and the little chance there was of doing any good in England, which made it necessary for stirring young men, who did not wish to be all their lives a burden to their friends, to try what they could do elsewhere.

I remarked upon this, that “ there were few who would not feel disposed first to ascertain, what chance there was of getting forward in England.”

To which he replied, there were not many opportunities for accomplishing that, and those who had them, did not know how to profit by them.

It seemed to me, I can hardly tell why, that he glanced at me there.

And then, he went on, “ after throwing away the bread put into their mouths, as he might say, they came to their relations, and expected *they* were to set them going again, and, in fact, suffer for other people’s folly.”

I again thought that he alluded to me, and felt rather nettled at it. So I replied to my uncle,

“ Yes, sir, there are some persons that intrude on their relations shamefully. If prosperous, they are for ever dancing after them to inflict the scandal of their association, but if adversity should surprise those lately affluent, those same sordid sycophants, become repulsively cold.”

My uncle felt that I meant this for a cut at him, and it gave him resolution enough, to tell me what I knew was uppermost in his mind before. Instead of disguising his meaning under the form of general reflections, he proceeded in a straight forward way, thus:—

“ As to that, if I am cold, I do not know, for my own part, what reason I have to be otherwise. You have had such opportunities as fall to the lot of few. If you did not choose to improve them, who was in fault but yourself?”

“ If I did not make good use of such opportunities as I have had,” I said, “ it certainly was my own fault. But that I had opportu-

nities at all, was not owing to the kindness of any of my relations."

"I don't know what you mean by that," my uncle tartly replied. "I have always been ready to assist you to the utmost with my advice."

That was very true. To do him justice, he had always been liberal of his advice, both to me and to my mother.

And so much I fairly admitted, but I added, "with the exception of that very cheap, and particularly abundant, but not over valuable commodity, which he had just named, I did not know that he had expended much of his substance on me."

He thought this undutiful in the extreme.

"You," said he, "are like the rest. You suppose that I have nothing else to do, but to provide for your extravagance. For my part, I am tired of it. One may do, and do, and do for ever, and never get thanked for it."

"If you have done me any service, uncle, you had better tell me of it, for my memory is defective, perhaps, in such matters."

To which he replied, that “ the more he did, the more he might do.”

But he did not put me to the blush, by mentioning any thing that he had actually done.

I answered, that “ he might be correctly informed on that point, but, I believed, so far as I was concerned, he could not speak from experience.”

“ This,” he hinted, “ was not language to hold to him, who had even condescended so far, as to visit me in Newgate, to bring me comfort.”

“ I know no reason,” I said, “ why I should not speak what I think. You have not been greatly impoverished by your kindness to me, and might spare your taunts in my present distress.”

My uncle evidently thought I was coming to the main business of my visit, and, expected that the next moment, I should ask him to give or lend to me, ten or twenty guineas.

He therefore angrily replied, “ your distress is nothing to me, you have brought it all on yourself, and I cannot relieve every body.”

“ True, uncle,” said I, “ and saying that to every body, who requires assistance, the selfish

heart excuses itself from assisting any one. My present distress, uncle, is not pecuniary distress, and I want nothing that you, if God had endowed you with feeling, could supply ; but as you are prodigal of good advice, and even affect piety, I venture to tell you it is my opinion, that the man who gives a guinea to relieve suffering humanity, and thus proves that he can, indeed, sympathise with an unfortunate brother, offers more acceptable homage to the beneficent author of our being, than he, who is for ever prating about faith, grace, charity, and religion.”

My uncle considered this conduct so outrageous, that I suspect he would have turned me out of his house, if I had not spared him the necessity of doing so, by walking out before he had time to instruct me, save by his looks, as to his wishes on that point.

I then determined to call on my old friends, the Hills, but they were, so I was informed by the servants, at Cheltenham. There was nothing now to remain in town for, and I set out that same day for the Priory.

It was night when I reached the inn, where I had formerly left my portmanteau, when resolved on that fatal flight, which had proved the source of so much disaster. Here I proposed to remain till the morning, not doubting but I should be able to gain some information from its inmates, of what was passing, or had lately occurred, at the residence of Mr. Haversham.

The people were new comers, but I, notwithstanding, commenced my inquiries. These being of a general character, were made in a tone not remarkably low. My voice, instantly caught the attention of a person who sat reading the newspaper in the bar, who now advanced, accosting me as an old acquaintance.

“ How do you do, Godfrey? I am very glad to see you back again. It was only the other day I heard of your misfortune.”

I looked at the speaker, and found with some surprise, that it was my former colleague, Skim.

“ Why,” said he, shaking me by the hand, “ why did you not send to me when you were in trouble. I could, probably, have done something for you.”

“Indeed!”

“To be sure, I could. Being in the house, the home secretary would lend an ear to one of us city men, quite as soon as to any of those fellows in dirty boots, who are always prating about the landed interest, for whom ministers always pretend so much respect, when speaking of ‘the country gentlemen.’”

“You are very kind, but I was anxious at the period to which you allude, to prevent my friends from being made acquainted with my situation. Besides, I was not at all aware that your influence extended to such matters.”

“O yes, to be sure it does. A man not overburthened with modesty can do any thing. It was but the other day, at the Middlesex sessions, I had influence enough to get a poor man, whom I particularly wanted to serve, found *guilty*.”

“Found *not guilty*, you mean.”

“No, I don’t. If the poor devil had been acquitted, he would have had to pay seven or eight and twenty shillings, fees, while being cast, the chairman fined him a shilling, and

discharged him. I think, by the way, after the experience you have had, you ought not to have to learn from an honourable gentleman like myself, that a man is not always secure from injury, because he is known to be innocent."

I thought of my affair with the honourable board, but as that was an old story, did not venture to rehearse it on this occasion. I, however, could not help expressing surprise, at finding that elsewhere, the absence of misconduct was so severely punished, and I inquired if it were designed, by inflicting a merely nominal punishment on guilt, and a real one on a needy man who was acquitted, to encourage incipient crime, that the young sinner, from experience of the advantage of a verdict against him, might proceed in outrage, and reach, in due time, a happy maturity of villainy.

"No," said he, "I have heard it conjectured, that the rule in question was framed for the encouragement of false swearing, by making it almost the duty of a humane juror to commit perjury, and criminate, in order to save from punishment."

I could not think Skim in earnest, and yet I was at a loss, to give a better reason, for the practice in question.

“ The fact is,” said he, speaking seriously, “ old Proseabout, the barrister, tells me, that the fees demanded on acquittal, must still be collected for the benefit of the parties who receive them, who would otherwise suffer greatly.”

“ That may be,” said I, “ but yet, the laws which punish, even with death, what is called robbery, ought not to pass over altogether those who despoil a poor guiltless fellow-subject, who comes within the grasp of their talons, because he has already suffered from false accusation, and unmerited reproach, even though they may be connected with the administration of justice.”

“ Well,” said he, “ if, in some cases, the law is too severe, in others, you must admit that its forbearance is admirable. Witness our bubble schemes;—why Scampo and Chiswell have been concerned in frauds, which half the thieves you have been in the habit of see-

ing in New South Wales, would not dare for a moment to contemplate.”

I owned that was true.

“ Chiswell, perhaps, I ought to tell you, has now some grand game to play down here. By the bye,” continued Skim, “ I only learned the history of your connection with Mr. Haversham about a week ago. What, I suppose he wants you, now you have got back, to marry the girl, for I hear she won’t have any body else.”

I replied, “ that I had not as yet seen the gentleman he had named, and, for his daughter, I only wished that the happiness of becoming her husband, had been reserved for me.”

“ Mind what you are at, George,” he resumed, “ or you will repent. Depend upon it there’s a screw loose. Between ourselves, he is all to pieces.”

“ I hope not!”

“ But I know it to be a fact, that is, unless the girl consents to marry young Chiswell; for the old fellow, who is just what you remember him at Alderton’s, has told me, that if Haversham don’t manage this, he’ll *sell him off.*”

“ Then I shall be glad to learn, that Adela, can make up her mind to save my kind old friend, from the ruin, which, otherwise, I hear awaits him.”

“ But they say she won’t. Between ourselves, that brings me here. Old Chiswell means to make short work of it, so I am in hopes I shall be able to get a slice of Haversham’s land, on good terms.”

“ Things will, I trust, take such a turn, as to disappoint you in this instance.”

“ You mean, it is your hope, that Mr. Haversham will get out of the scrape. There is no chance for him. Chiswell is determined to ruin him, so he told me, if he will not do every thing he wishes, and Chiswell knows what he is about, as he acts under the advice of Scampo, and you know what he is.”

“ I do,” I said, “ for I very well remember, he offered to make my fortune, if I would engage with him in certain speculations, the whole of which were of the most infamous character.”

“ You mentioned it to me at the time. Well, he came with some of the same plans to me;

but the grand *spec* which he pressed upon me, was the printing the history of a battered brazen faced old drab, who had once been pretty, with anecdotes of her admirers, at least, such of them who would not come down with hush money, and submit to be robbed, to escape being traduced."

" Of course, you refused."

" Why, it was not in my line, and I rather objected to it, as being a family man. He, however, told me, that this was nothing at all, for he himself had a wife and fifteen children, and, as the father of a family, and a moral character, he considered it good policy to make his offspring, his daughters especially, familiar with all that was gross and execrable, to render them as partial as he himself was, to refinement and virtue."

" That would be no difficult task," I remarked, and I really said what I thought.

" Perhaps not," said Skim; " however, I would not close with him, but he went on without me, old Chiswell, as I understand, finding the capital. They also published books about

love, written in a style, and embellished in a manner, which *surpasses all description*. To these they gave the names of ‘ Tom Jones,’ ‘ The whole Duty of Man,’ ‘ Baxter’s Shove for a Christian,’ and other popular and pious titles, by which they were known to the *under-hand* trade, and a roaring sale they had with them.”

“ Their profits, I suppose, were enormous?”

“ Beyond every thing ; but not satisfied with these, they added to them, the printers’ wages ; and Scampo, first defending one book, as a moral work, when it was prosecuted by Government, had, afterwards, the audacity to maintain, in the same court, that its undoubted infamy, precluded the printer from having any legal claim upon the proprietor of it.”

“ That was worthy of the proprietor, and of Scampo.”

“ The counsel for the prosecutor did not scruple to say, that Scampo was a base, black-hearted scoundrel ; but that, Scampo said, would break no bones.”

“ And was not very severe,” I remarked.

“ He felt it a little more severe upon him, when his name was struck off the rolls.”

“ Then he can no longer practise as an attorney.”

“ Not legally, but he called himself upon that, a *conveyancer*, and still acts under the rose, borrowing another shark’s name, who has not yet been found out, as an attorney, and manages all Chiswell’s affairs. He is now actively employed in forwarding the marriage of young Chiswell, and Miss Haversham. But it will never do. The fellow is such a wretch that she can’t consent.”

“ Have you seen the young man yourself?”;

“ To be sure I have ; and upon my soul, I can’t blame the wench for refusing him.”

“ What is there objectionable in him ?”

“ Nothing material, save and except his person, manner, habits, disposition, and character.”

“ Are all these objectionable ?”

“ They are. The fellow is an ourang outang to look at ; his conversation would disgrace a parrot ; he gets drunk in the morning ; and withal, he is so mean, that he borrows money of

his own servant, and forgets to pay him ; swears furiously at the poor man if he asks for his own, and is withal so suspicious, that he cannot walk half a dozen yards without clapping his hand on his pocket and fob, to ascertain, if his own father is with him, that he is not in danger of being robbed by his companion."

" I hope," I exclaimed with energy, " such beauty and such worth, as are united in Adela, will not be thrown away on a wretch like this."

" Why then," said Skim, " I suppose you will marry her to prevent it."

In reply, I begged of Skim not to treat the subject with levity ; and added, I should be the happiest of men, if it were in my power to act as he supposed I thought of doing.

This produced new inquiries, and I then explained, at considerable length, the circumstances which precluded me from offering myself ; that is, I gave him an account of all that had happened to me since I left England.

Skim listened with apparent interest, and with great surprise.

" Well now," said he, when I had finished,

“ I suppose I shall startle you if I tell you what I think. Under the circumstances you have described, I should not hesitate to marry Haversham’s daughter, that is, if I thought it for my interest.”

“ You would not !” I exclaimed with amazement.

“ Not for a moment.”

“ You forget that this would be to commit bigamy ; and I might consequently occasion irreparable mischief to Adela.”

“ As to that, so far as Adela is concerned, I think by preventing her from becoming the wife of young Chiswell, you will save her from irreparable evil ; and as to the bigamy you talk of, really your marriage seems to have been so much of a juggle altogether, that I should feel very little scruple on that account.”

I could not deny, that I was rather disposed to concur in the view which Skim took of my union in New South Wales, with Jacquiline Delville, alias Fan Dabsley.

“ Tell me,” said he, “ can you feel that any moral obligation exists which ought to make

you devote your life to a woman, who has thus entrapped you ?”

I promptly answered in the negative.

“ Have you any very great attachment to her person ?”

I answered with greater readiness than before,

“ No.”

“ Does she know your real name ?”

“ Certainly not. From first to last I went by my assumed name of Bainbridge. The letters I received were so addressed, and no one in the colony, ever knew that I had been called by any other.”

“ I should guess that having been married in a false name, she would have no legal claim upon you here. But be that as it may, as she cannot come to this country for several years at the least, and will probably never come at all—and as, if she were to do so, being ignorant of your name, she could never find you out,—I really do not see, that you ought to give yourself the slightest concern about such a jade, as you describe this Fan Dabsley to be.”

It really struck me, that there was a great

deal of reason in what Skim said. All that was shown to me, all that was told me, all that was sworn on the subject, by Lean Iniquity and his companions, had never thoroughly satisfied me that I could really have gone through the marriage ceremony without remembering something of it. But taking it for granted that I actually had become in the eye of the law a husband, I certainly felt most sincerely, that while in my senses, I had never consented to marry,—Fan Dabsley I mean,—and therefore I did not feel that I ought to be bound by a mere form, which had been resorted to, while I was insensible of what was passing. Then taking into consideration, the almost insuperable difficulties opposed to her following me to England, and finding me under my original name, I really judged that Skim's advice to think nothing of her, was not to be despised. Besides, I reflected that Jacquiline had not the means of paying her passage to England, for before I embarked to return, I had taken care to secure the money left in the Sydney savings bank, when I set out for *the Bush*, and I had considerable hopes, that her attrac-

tions were so far on the wane, that it would not be easy for her to obtain a passage in the usual way.

The result of all this was, I came to a resolution, that I owed no attachment to my wife, and that so far as she was concerned, there could be no impropriety in my endeavouring to obtain the hand of Adela. Whether this would be acting quite right by the latter, was a question which I could not so easily dispose of. Eventually, however, being persuaded, nay almost certain, that the concealment I meditated could never by any chance be discovered, I thought it would not be doing very wrong, to let my conduct be shaped by my wishes. Perhaps in this I was culpable, but many men, remarkable for sanctity of character, have scrupled not to do what the world would blame, where detection seemed impossible, and punishment out of the question.

CHAPTER XVI.

I make my appearance at the Priory, and am kindly received by its inhabitants—Mr. Haversham questions me on certain points, which alarm me, but my fears are speedily removed—I am truly happy from having got rid of one wife, and being in expectation of getting another—My transports are suddenly interrupted, by a remarkably awkward accident.

As I am somewhat diffident of my powers in the descriptive line, I shall not attempt the minute particulars of the scene which occurred on the following morning, when, on going to the Priory, it was my fortune to encounter Mr. Haversham and Adela on the same spot, where in all the frenzy of rage and jealousy, I had been horror struck, at meeting them, when I was last in the grounds of the Priory.

Adela was lovely as ever, but an air of languor was discernible, which told me that sorrow

and she were intimately acquainted. The joy of father and daughter, at seeing me returned in safety, was expressed with a generous warmth, which flattered my vanity, while it went to my heart.

I answered the eager inquiries which they made, touching my late situation, and my adventures generally. Some of Mr. Haversham's questions were of a searching nature, and really startled me not a little. For instance, he asked if the beauties I had seen in New South Wales, native or English, had never made some impression on my heart;—had I never seen *one*, I felt disposed to regard as mine, never met with a female, I could be content to call “*my wife?*”

Though a little staggered at being subjected to this sort of examination, I bravely answered all his interrogatories in the negative; and followed that up, by adding the common-place *but*, which a man, in such a situation, utters purely as a matter of course, indeed, mechanically, without reference to truth—the loveliness I then gazed upon, was not to be paralleled on earth. This, which is generally a mere com-

pliment, hardly disguised as a fact, was in the case of Adela, a simple matter of fact, disguised as a compliment.

In the course of our conversation, Mr. Haversham hinted to me, that a circumstance of some importance had occurred while I was away. His station in life was not what it had been, and whatever his wishes might be, he had some doubts whether it would now be wise on my part, to think of Adela as my future wife.

With the startlish sensibility of a man, who is conscious of having something to conceal, I was tempted to connect this hint with the inquiries, by which it had been preceded.

It occurred to me, that he had written, and caused others to write, to New South Wales in my favour, and it was probable that he had received answers to those letters, and, not very unlikely, that, in some of them, my wife might be mentioned. I had not thought of this before, when I adopted Skim's opinion, that it was almost impossible for my secret to be discovered. The dread that such might really be the case, now filled me with apprehension and dismay.

While these thoughts were passing in my mind, and while, under their influence, I was tempted to act with that frankness, which I had intended should be the rule of my conduct, before the advantages of pursuing the opposite course, had been so forcibly pressed upon me, Adela, in obedience to a sign from her father, withdrew. I rallied as well as I could, expressing the delight I felt at seeing Mr. Haversham once more, and I spoke of his daughter, and expressed my admiration of her person and character, more warmly than I could have done had she been present. I dwelt on the felicity which awaited him, who might win her hand, but had not resolution enough to ask the precise meaning of what I had heard.

Mr. Haversham proceeded more fully to explain himself, by giving me the particulars of the situation in which he had been placed with old Chiswell, of whom he spoke with respect, and even with some degree of kindness, and of the great anxiety of that person, to see his only son united to Adela.

Having stated so much, he next questioned

me, (I thought, rather suspiciously,) as to the state of my affections.

“ You may think my conduct strange and abrupt,” said he, “ but time produces extraordinary effects on our minds, as well as in our circumstances. Tell me, frankly—do you still wish to see Adela yours ?”

I assured him, that, to gain her, appeared to me the greatest happiness which a mortal could covet.

“ But, say, that poverty and severe privations were unavoidably attendant on your union.”

“ Trust me, sir, that would not make me waver for an instant.”

“ Reflect, Godfrey ; it is possible you may hereafter become rich in your own right. Were that to happen, might you not, when too late, wish you had been less precipitate in choosing a wife ?”

“ Pray, sir, dismiss the injurious thought for ever. Were such an event to occur, believe me I say it without affecting what I do not feel, the greatest joy it could give, would be derived from the opportunity it would afford

me, of manifesting my gratitude to Adela, and to you."

" This is well," he replied. " Among the few real gems which decorate this imperfect state of being, I deem faithful love, the brightest. The Hindoos say, ' affection had lived with the Deity from all eternity, in Heaven, before it descended to this orb ;' and, in truth, I think its splendour on earth, would seem to justify the fable, and give glorious evidence of its celestial origin."

We joined Adela in the breakfast parlour. Though kindness abounded, conversation was rather sparingly indulged. Mr. Haversham was thoughtful, and evidently meditating on something which was not before him ; and Adela was, at least I fancied so, depressed by his abstraction.

A servant announced, that Mr. Chiswell, senior, desired to speak with Mr. Haversham. He promptly attended to the summons, and I and Adela remained alone.

It was then, that she resumed the exposure of Chiswell's baseness and insolence, which she

had begun by letter. From what she said, I collected, that he had endeavoured, by every possible means, to gain her promise to marry his son, but had not taken that tone of menace with the father, which he calculated might be successfully used with a timid youthful female. He had not thought it necessary to proceed to such an extremity while his son was away, and he had not returned from Trinidad, till within the last two months. She had still hoped, to spare her parent the shock, which his feelings must sustain, if he were informed of the course pursued by one whom he had considered a kind and liberal friend. Within these few days, Chiswell had become more urgent than ever, and calculating on her continued silence, he sternly declared, that "her father was in his clutches, and never should get out of them while he lived, till he also became her father."

With respect to the young man, though Adela did not go to the same length, to which Skim had carried his description, enough fell from her to prove most satisfactorily, that he had not rivalled me in her affections. When

I pressed her on this subject, she spoke out, and, at length, I had the delicious satisfaction of hearing her declare, with eyes averted, but with a tone of firm resolution, that she would rather be mine in poverty, than share the splendour of a throne with him.

Mr. Chiswell, with his son, had recently left the Priory, for London. At parting, he had distinctly assured her, that “ he would no longer be made a fool of, and she must either consent to be the wife of his son, or see her father reduced to beggary. “ Hard as the alternative was, Adela remarked, she was fully persuaded, that the latter would be preferred with him, to a family connection with a person so base, so brutal, and, in every respect, so contemptible, as his pretended friend.

It would now, she added, be her task to prepare her father for what he had to expect from Mr. Chiswell. His grief, if the relentless persecutor should execute his threat, would be on her account; but she entertained no doubt of being able to satisfy him, that the loss of fortune altogether, would be an evil of less

magnitude, than that with which she was threatened, in the event of her being prevailed upon to subscribe to the conditions, which, according to him, were the only ones by which it might be averted.

I expressed my doubts, whether it was possible for him to possess such extensive means for doing mischief, as he had pretended to her were at his command. It also struck me, that if he spoke the truth, as, after all, pecuniary gain was his great object, he might probably be bought off. In consideration of the sacrifice of a part of his property to Chiswell's avarice, the father of Adela might, perhaps, be left to enjoy the rest without molestation.

The latter idea, had not occurred before to Adela, and it inspired her with a hope, that some arrangement might be made, less disastrous, and humiliating in its character, than what she had been accustomed to contemplate. How my ears tingled with delight, while I heard her applaud what I had suggested ! The admiration which she testified for the feelings which had risen in my mind, proved to me the vast

superiority of hers, not only over that of females generally, but almost over every human being with whom I had ever conversed.

The next few days, which for the most part were spent in the Priory, though I continued to lodge in the same inn, with my friend Skim, were days of bliss. Adela exulted that I had so opportunely arrived, as she felt assured that my presence would largely contribute to allay her father's wrath and affliction, when all the meanness of Chiswell should be exposed. It would be in my power, she said, to console him for any sacrifice of pride, or of property, to which he might be constrained to submit. The undissembled exultation, so flattering to me, which warmed her pure and generous heart, failed not to produce a kindred sensation in mine. Long forgotten dreams of happiness were revived, and in the confident anticipation of felicity, I was already happy.

It would indeed be difficult to imagine a more powerful contrast, than was furnished by the delightfully intellectual society in which I now found myself, to that which it had been

my lot to endure in New South Wales, more especially after I had been yoked to Fan Dabsley. I often recalled the affectation of fine feeling,—the real unfeigned vulgarity, of the *soi-disant* Jacquilina, and their odious association with huge sprawling limbs, and staring, masculine, coarse, unmeaning and dirty face. Her dull goggle eyes, and her enormous mouth, which some of her old friends pronounced to be like that of a horse, while others said it merely resembled a horse's shoe, and moreover her insolent tongue, her intolerable ill-nature, and unconquerable aversion for cleanliness, all were present to my imagination, and made me bless the happy change which had taken place in my affairs.

From these hateful objects, I turned with ecstacy, to the softness, delicacy, and intelligence which heightened the lustre of the expressive features, and added grace and splendour, to the bewitching symmetry of Adela. The magic of her voice, the elegance of her deportment, and the union of meekness and energy, which adorned her speech, all imaged to me one of the bright

inhabitants of another world, and led my enraptured spirit to revel in visions of loveliness and joy, which were almost seraphic.

Each day, each hour disclosed some new excellency in Adela. Possessed of such a treasure as I was convinced her husband must find in her, all other acquisitions seemed to me so inferior in value, as to be absolutely insignificant, and I could not bring myself to believe that any privation, any toil would ever be painful, which I might be called upon to endure, for her benefit or protection.

I usually breakfasted with Skim, before I went to the Priory. One fine morning I took a short walk while it was getting ready. My mind was full of delectable ideas, which had now become familiar to it, and rejoicing in the flattering prospect before me, I did not fail to reflect how vastly I was indebted to the good sense and prudent counsel of Skim, for by this time, I was convinced that Mr. Haversham had no idea that I had a wife elsewhere. But for the cogent arguments which Skim so opportunely urged, thought I, my first step would have been

to announce that I had been married while abroad. Acting thus, I should have doomed myself to wretchedness, and made Adela unhappy. And for what, I proceeded to ask myself, was this to be done? Not because I was attached, or felt in any way bound in duty, to regard as my wife, the miserable female who claimed that title. I was quite convinced that I owed her no kindness. By marring my own fortune, I could not even have done her any good whatever, as the probability was, it would never be her lot to revisit England. The difficulties in the way of her doing so, of finding me, and of establishing her claim to my person, were obviously so very great, that I wondered I could have thought for a single moment, of her ever being able to accomplish all this. "It would not have been more ridiculous," I merrily added, speaking out, as no one was in sight, "to have supposed that Westminster Abbey, would some day be polite enough to favour the Monument, with a morning call."

Divers pleasant conceits, some not less witty than the one I have just given by way of sam-

ple, occurred to me, and more would probably have succeeded to them, if I had not been rather strangely interrupted.

When the mind of an individual is active, it generally makes his limbs so. On the occasion which I am now describing, the playful ideas which chased each other through my brain, made me unconsciously first walk fast, then gently trot, next briskly canter, and finally break into a full gallop.

In this way, I was rapidly returning to the inn, when turning the corner of the Green lane which led to it, I had the misfortune to bounce against a woman with such violence, that I almost knocked her down. Extremely vexed at this circumstance, I was proceeding to make a very genteel apology, when my ears were astounded with the hoarse demand,

“ Can’t you see where you are coming, spooney ? ”

And with astonishment and horror, I found the female I had so unexpectedly stumbled upon, was no other than my wife, formerly Jacquolina Delville, alias Fan Dabsley.

CHAPTER XVII.

I escape from my wife, and become exceedingly candid with Mr. Haversham, on being satisfied that my want of candour had been found out—Adela is shocked at hearing that I am already married, but recovers sooner than I could expect—Mr. Haversham is still kind, and opposes my retreat—I make another strange discovery.

HAD the devil himself, with the odious peculiarities ascribed to his person, and the grand symbol of his authority, that is, with his horns, tail, and pitchfork, thought proper to honour me with an unexpected visit, I should not have been more disconcerted and dismayed, than I was, at thus unexpectedly meeting with my wife.

She, after recovering from the first shock, manifested no surprise, at recognising me, but coolly called out, “ Bainbridge, how do you do ?” I might, with great propriety, have given the

popular stock repartee, “none the better for seeing of you,” but really I was too much shocked to attempt any thing so clever as that, and stood aghast, staring at the unwelcome apparition, with my mouth as well as my eyes wide open.

But when she extended her arms, as I supposed, for the purpose of inflicting upon me, a proof of her conjugal tenderness, it was literally more than I could stand, and I accordingly *turned upon my heel*, and then signified to both of *my heels*, that I was well inclined to *take to them*. In fewer words, I ran away as fast as I could.

My wife gave chase to me for a few seconds, calling on me “not to be a pig-headed fool, but to stop.” I thought, as I fled, that I should be a fool, not to go on.

I exerted great speed, as, indeed, might naturally be expected on such an occasion, and had soon the satisfaction, such as it was, of finding that I had distanced the enemy.

But this afforded me small consolation. To know that my wife had got back to England, and had found out where I was, seemed to me

of all evils, the greatest that could have befallen me. It was impossible for me to doubt, that by some means she had gained information of my present views and intentions, and such being the case, had they concerned her less than they did, as she might think, in this instance, I was perfectly satisfied, that she would leave no stone unturned, to baffle and defeat them.

The hopes, in which an hour before, I had exulted with unbounded rapture, were no more. Longer to think of acting on my lately adopted resolution, would have been equally criminal and ridiculous. Knowing that my evil genius was so near, could the fact have been concealed from the inmates of the Priory, I was quite sure, that, I must speedily encounter the most formidable annoyance. To me, however, it appeared more than probable, that to publish there, the claim she had upon my person, was the main object of my wife's journey to those parts, where, so far as I was informed, she never had friend, relation, or business before.

The baseness of attempting to deceive, under such circumstances, struck me very forcibly,

and I determined forthwith to wait upon Mr. Haversham, and atone for my former disingenuous conduct, by offering the most ample disclosures it was in my power to make. I am, perhaps, too slow to give myself credit for truly virtuous feelings, but I have often suspected, that the laudable resolution I have just recorded, was partly adopted, from the conviction that so far as Mr. Haversham was concerned, it was wholly unnecessary, for I certainly felt resolute to be explicit, in proportion as I was assured that from his being already apprized of all I could tell, he would gain nothing by my candour.

Be this as it may, I lost no time in repairing to the Priory. It was about ten o'clock, when I joined Mr. Haversham and Adela in the library. I thought my friend threw on me a scrutinizing, and in fact, an accusing glance. This might be merely fancy, for when a man knows that he merits reproach, every trifling incident, makes him suspect that he is on the point of receiving something of his deserts. And Adela appeared to be unusually embarrassed, as if she hoped for a denial, which I was not prepared to give.

“ You look flurried,” said Mr. Haversham, “ and appear somewhat disturbed.”

“ I am disturbed, sir,” I replied, “ and sorry I am to say, it is *now*, my own misconduct that troubles me.”

“ Indeed !”

“ Sir, I have basely abused your kindness, and shamefully deceived one, I looked at Adela, who I am sure would never have deceived me.”

“ What mean you George !” exclaimed Adela.
“ You know not what you say.”

“ Too well I know what I am saying, and trust me, I feel severely, (to feel it too severely is impossible,) the humiliating situation in which I am placed.”

“ Of what do you speak ?” Mr. Haversham sternly demanded, and he fixed his eye steadfastly on me, and seemed impatiently to await my answer.

“ Heretofore, sir,” I replied, “ you have seen me the victim of error, but not the perpetrator of deliberate fraud. You have seen me condemned for crimes in which I had no participation. It remained for this wretched day, to

convict me in your presence, and in that of Adela, of the vilest imposture. In thus denouncing myself, I feel that I offer but a miserably imperfect expiation of my offence. Now, with late contrition, I owe it to truth, and to this confiding dear one, to say, I ought not, since my return, to have hoped for the blessing of her hand. I ought, from the first, to have acknowledged to her, and to you, that, while I was away, I unhappily became the husband of another."

"The husband of another!" Adela faintly repeated. A death-like paleness came over her, and she looked wildly and incredulously round.

"Yes, Adela, it is even so," I proceeded, "though never did my attachment experience the slightest abatement, the vile artifices of an atrocious woman and her associates, made me unconsciously——"

I should have attempted to extenuate the misconduct I avowed, but Adela was no longer an auditor. Her gentle spirit sunk under the confession of my inconstancy. She sobbed convulsively, and but for the timely assist-

ance of her father, would have sunk on the carpet.

I assisted him to convey her to another apartment. The servants were called, and such means used as the case required. After a considerable time, she appeared about to revive, when Mr. Haversham requested me to withdraw again to the library, where he would shortly rejoin me. The sight of my countenance, at that moment, he remarked, might possibly affect Adela too much. I felt the propriety of this hint, threw one long, and, as I despairingly intended it to be, a last sorrowing look, on my still unconscious mistress, and retired.

Mr. Haversham soon came to me. He said, Adela had partly recovered, was tolerably calm, and would, he hoped, remain so. Throughout the late scene, a tear had glistened in his eye, but no expression of reproach, or displeasure, had as yet escaped from him.

He now spoke, rather in a reproving tone, and said, “ he had hoped to have found me superior to stratagems like those, which I had not disdained to employ.”

To this, I answered, that I sought not to escape that censure which I felt I had most richly deserved, but intreated him to hear my account of all the circumstances. To this, he did not object; and I then made him acquainted with the various facts connected with my marriage in New South Wales, as well as with the considerations which had induced me to conceal it.

He listened to all I had to offer, with anxious attention, and with indulgence, and remarked, that “I had given explanation, which tended, in no slight degree, to palliate the error I had committed.”

“Accept, sir,” said I, “for this kindness, the humblest thanks of one, who, greatly as he may have wandered, has not been wanting in gratitude to you. I have occupied your mind—I have disturbed your peace too much. The only atonement I can offer, is the promise which I now solemnly and sincerely make, not to offend again, by intruding on your benevolence; and, in fulfilment of this promise, I now take my leave, with the fixed resolution to appear in

your presence no more, and to leave, in the course of a few days, the country for ever."

"Stay, young man," he cried—"Stay," he again called, in a peremptory tone.

The eagerness of his manner, arrested my steps, just as I was on the point of quitting the room, and I waited to hear any parting admonition, reproof, or command, that he might be disposed to offer.

He paused for some moments, and crossed, and re-crossed the room, without speaking.

"My friend—George—that is, Mr. Godfrey, I mean"—he at length said, "you are too precipitate. You must not leave the country—not till I have had further speech with you. Promise me this, I insist upon it."

"Sir, I deem it but an act of duty towards you, forthwith to quit, and that, too, for ever, a scene in which I have acted a part, at once so conspicuous, and so discreditable."

"At least, defer doing so—do this, at my earnest request. Promise me—you may yet serve me most essentially."

“ That, my dear sir, is a sufficient inducement.”

“ No evasion young man. You solemnly pledge yourself to remain.”

“ I do.”

“ I had it in contemplation to speak to you, respecting the conduct of Mr. Chiswell. I have to inform you, that since your arrival, a strange change in his deportment has occurred. He has even gone the length of threatening me with ruin, or, at least, with the loss of a very considerable portion of my property, unless I forthwith prevail upon Adela to be married to his son.”

“ I have heard of his purpose before,” I replied, “ and I am very sorry to say, that I happen to know he really intends to do what he threatens.”

“ Certainly,” said Mr. Haversham, “ I have been incautious ;—I have been too confiding—but could mortal suspect the base, cold blooded treachery, which now marks his conduct, in one who seemed so friendly ?”

“ There is no crime of which I could not

believe him capable. I, however, would press upon you, and, indeed, upon Adela, that the young man, does not necessarily participate in the baseness of his parent; he may be all that is generous and good."

" True—the son of such a man might be as virtuous, as his father is the reverse."

" I, sir, should therefore hope, that the threatened danger may at once be averted; that is, I—I hope that Adela may find it not impossible to relieve you from the expected hostility of this enemy, without sacrificing her own happiness."

" Though I am little friendly to those sordid bargains, where the union of pecuniary interests, and not that of affectionate hearts, is attempted to be secured by means of a marriage, I confess, that, in the situation in which I lately found myself, and saw Adela, I should not have been sorry if this young man had seemed likely to console an amiable female, for your unfortunate absence."

" Trust me, sir, I would fain indulge the persuasion, that this may happen yet."

“ It is impossible ! at least, according to all present appearances. This young man, thus, at least, it is reported of him, seems so utterly incapable of conducting himself well, that I really cannot attempt to school the objections which Adela urges against him, not merely as a husband, but even as a common acquaintance.”

“ I have heard already an unfavourable account of him, but was disposed to think the description furnished of his imperfections, exaggerated.”

“ So I have wished to believe, but yet there is a something about him which I cannot get over. There is a staring impertinence in his manner, and the purse proud domineering tone, in which he orders the servants about, marks a vulgarity of habit, and—I had almost said, a brutality of disposition, which is eminently disgusting, to me, at least ; for I cannot believe a man feels kindly for his equals, who is invariably coarse and harsh in his deportment, to those beneath him.”

“ He is young, sir, and time will do much

towards correcting the insolence which frequently grows on the consciousness of importance, we all feel more or less, when the youth first finds himself admitted to the rank of manhood."

" I would fain think favourably of him, but I know not how it happened, in the course of a few weeks he made himself, even among the servants, an object of general hatred, and of universal derision. To such a pitch has the dislike of him risen, and such is the opinion entertained of him, that positively he has been accused of pilfering several articles, which have been missed since he came to the Priory."

" This, sir, I should think can only have been urged in the spirit of wanton mischief. However sordid his disposition, it is impossible to suspect him seriously, of stooping to such petty frauds."

" That certainly has been my feeling; yet it oddly happened, that a week ago I entered his chamber, which is situate next to mine, by accident in his absence. There, to my infinite astonishment, I saw a diamond ring, which I

had lost, and respecting which inquiries had been made throughout the house. Just then he entered, saw on what object my eyes rested, and hastened to offer it to me, saying that he had found it in the park not half an hour before. Perhaps I did him wrong, but I really thought that guilty confusion was in his face, while he spoke."

" The idea was suggested by what you had previously heard to his prejudice. Reflection, I am sure, must satisfy you, that it could not be well founded, and I am most sincerely anxious to learn, that the other complaints made of him are equally groundless, and that Adela may find him all she could desire as a husband, and you all you would ask from heaven in a son. To know that this wish has been realized, will afford me the sweetest consolation I can experience, in the exile to which I am doomed."

" Nay, it may not be necessary for you to leave England."

" After the humiliation I have sustained, I would on no account remain in it. I would,

however, fain hear of your daughter's happiness."

" Happiness she will never know, with the young man of whom we speak. But he and his father are here. The old man is determined upon losing no time. He already stalks over my grounds, as if they were his own. He is talking to his son of projected improvements."

While Mr. Haversham was speaking, Mr. Chiswell and his son passed the window, without seeing us. I recognised them both, and stood aghast.

" What is the matter?" exclaimed Mr. Haversham. " You seem horror stricken."

" And so I am. Is that—is that wretch young Mr. Chiswell?"

" It is. The nearer one is the young man ; he is now putting his hand to his pocket,"

" Then never let Adela be *his* wife. Marry her to any clown in your neighbourhood ; bestow her on any mechanic in the metropolis, nay, on any dustman or homeless beggar, but never let her be the wife of that miscreant."

“ I was not aware that you had any knowledge of young Mr. Chiswell.”

“ Nor was I. Sir, it was my misfortune to know him, where men do not retain their real names. There, sir, this fellow was called *Lean Iniquity*. In describing my own misfortunes, I have already disclosed some of his crimes. Doubt no longer, that more than the worst of whatever may have been said of him, here, is true.”

“ And are you sure, quite sure! that the young man who has just passed, and the person who was elsewhere called Lean Iniquity, are the same?”

“ Most positive. He escaped from the colony, a few weeks before I sailed for England.”

“ He arrived here from Trinidad, as it was said by his father, and the truth of his statement I never questioned, about two months since, and rather unexpectedly.”

“ But a few moments ago,” said I, “ it was my earnest prayer that Adela, without doing great violence to her own feelings, might be able to unite herself with the son of your perse-

cutor ; but now I implore you, come what may, never to think of sacrificing your angelic offspring, to that demon.”

“ Of this we will say more hereafter. But now I have business of some importance to attend to. Let me see you this evening.”

I bowed.

“ Nay, answer me. Be with me by eight, or rather earlier. Fail not.”

I bowed in assent, and would have retired, when Mr. Haversham seizing me by the hand, and pressing it with a degree of cordiality which I did not look for, and felt that I did not deserve, repeated his request in these words,

“ As you hope for happiness here, and look for salvation hereafter, on this occasion, I conjure you, fail me not.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

I am much embarrassed through the conduct of my friend, but conceive hopes of essentially serving him—Mr. Chiswell attends for the purpose of witnessing the marriage of his son—Mr. Haversham gives up his opposition to the proposed match, and Adela, to my surprise, does the same.

THE manner in which Mr. Haversham spoke at parting, and, indeed, his deportment through the whole of the interview which I had sought, was not what I was prepared to expect it would be. Indignant reproof I anticipated, and I had calculated that his astonishment would be as great as his anger. Neither the one, nor the other, had been manifested in any thing like the degree which the occasion, as it appeared to me, would have justified, and his extreme anxiety that I should delay my intended departure, and be with him by eight o'clock that

evening, for a purpose which had not been stated, was, to me, as perfectly inexplicable as any part of his conduct had ever been.

My mind was, as it were, tossed about in a whirlwind. All that I had seen and heard, served but to confound. That my wife should so soon have found me out, was a circumstance for which, I was utterly at a loss to account. I remembered the kind assurances, assurances, at least, intended to be kind, which I had received from the governor, when I was about to leave Sydney, that he would take into consideration the case of my wife, and I was prepared to expect that he might, at no distant day, remit what remained of her punishment ; but still I was at a loss to guess how she could so soon have found her way to England, and still more so to imagine how she had managed thus promptly to discover me, distant as my present abode was from London, and all her former haunts, and passing as I did by my real name, which, I confidently believed, she had never heard pronounced by any accident.

It further struck me, as most remarkable,

that, on the same day, and almost, if not quite, in the same hour, I should see Lean Iniquity—that the two wretches, whom, of all the human kind, I had most desire to shun, should have been thus brought to the same point, to blast my hopes, seemed to me as extraordinary a combination of evil, as fiends of darkness could have conspired to produce.

In the midst of my distress, I felt some satisfaction in the belief that I had, at all events, done something in my last interview with Mr. Haversham, towards defeating the views of Lean Iniquity, and, at least endeavoured to save Adela from the pollution and misery, of a union with that vilest of miscreants.

And, on a sudden, it occurred to me that more might yet be done. I knew enough of Lean Iniquity's affairs to feel quite certain, that he had not returned to England, in consequence of any pardon, or remission of punishment having been granted to him. Hence, I concluded, that, at least, I should have the power of revenging the harshness with which Chiswell was prepared to act towards Mr. Haversham, and on further

reflection, I conceived some hope, that, by threatening the junior with the consequences, which, by law, attach to premature return from transportation, his miserable father might be induced to pause in his rapacious career, and suffer the intended victim of extortion to escape, to save his name from new disgrace, and his son from the necessity of resuming his travels.

I passed the day in a chaos of wild ideas and extravagant conjectures. At length, the hour approached, at which, my friend had so earnestly entreated me to be with him. I took care to be at the Priory in good time.

Mr. Haversham cordially welcomed me, and praised my punctuality. He inquired most anxiously if I had seen either of the Chiswells, and manifested much satisfaction at learning that I had not, and further, that I had no reason to believe I had been seen, or heard of, by either of them.

“I have wished you to be here,” said he, “as a witness, and I think you will be spectator of a scene, such as you are not likely to forget. You know enough of me,” he added, “so I

flatter myself, to be pretty well assured, that I have no extraordinary predilection for treacherous stratagem, but when villains seek to ensnare their betters, those who have no wish to be dishonest, are justified in using artifice to defeat them. I wish you to attend unseen, and would, therefore, request you to take your place behind those curtains. The favour I ask of you, is not for myself alone, but for Adela."

“ Say no more, sir,” I replied. “ A higher temptation than that which you now hold out to me, could not be proffered by man. But, at the mention of that name, which has just fallen from your lips, amidst the painful emotions it wakes, I desire—but tremble to ask, if Adela have, in some degree, recovered from the shock which it was my miserable fate to inflict.”

“ Perhaps,” he remarked, “ it will rather mortify your pride, to hear that she is not only much recovered, but is perfectly calm—nay, I think I may add, almost cheerful; which is certainly more than could have been reasonably expected,

while the news which disturbed her, is yet so recent."

I attempted to say, that I was well pleased to hear it, though, I confess, I had expected rather more sensibility on her part.

We were in the Library, when this conversation took place. A range of windows ran along one side of the apartment. Bookcases were placed against the piers, which divided them; and it was in one of the recesses formed by the windows, that Mr. Haversham desired me to station myself.

"Mr. Chiswell," said he, "is resolved to bring matters to an issue without delay. Since such is his fixed determination, it must be so. He will be here immediately. His solicitor, a very worthy person, (worthy his employer I mean,) and his clergyman, come with him. *He* takes care to be provided with witnesses, so do I. Time presses—do as I have requested. Listen most attentively to whatever may pass within your hearing, but should my conduct appear strange, or reprehensible, let no sudden

surprise, or indignation, call you from your hiding place, till I distinctly require you to stand forth. I may put you to a severe trial, but do as I have said."

I immediately passed into the recess, and the curtains were drawn before me. Mr. Haversham then left the room, but soon returned, accompanied by one or more persons. He spoke in a low tone to the party he brought with him, and the little I could hear, led me to conclude that he was placing other individuals in the remaining recesses.

It was not long, before Mr. Chiswell's well known voice struck on my ear. His tone, while introducing others, who entered at the same time, was decidedly that of a man who assumes courtesy, but as a preliminary to harshness and reproach.

" Well," said he, himself, his son, and their witnesses, or companions, having seated themselves, " I hope, Mr. Haversham, you have thought upon what I said, and are prepared, on full reflection, to settle this business at once."

"I am," Mr. Haversham replied, "well disposed, to set all questions between us at *rest*, for ever, and amicably, if it may be so——"

"I'm very glad to hear it," interrupted old Chiswell. "You mean, then, to say, you consent that your daughter shall marry my son. You are a sensible man, Mr. Haversham. Well, since this is all settled, bring in the girl, and here's my friend, the Reverend Donald M'Doodle, who will make the happy couple one, in less than five minutes."

"You are rather precipitate, sir. I have not said, that I proposed to arrange the matters in dispute between us, by a matrimonial expedient."

"Then what the devil did you mean? I should be glad to know, when, only now, you told me, you would settle the business amicably."

"I said what you have repeated, and I meant what I said. But, Mr. Chiswell, I was in hopes we might have adjusted our pecuniary transactions, without having any thing to do with marriage, and that matters, originating between you and me, might be arranged, without,

in their consequences, involving the future well-being of others.”

“ But why not by marriage, put every thing to rights at once ?”

“ First, because my daughter is little disposed to unite herself with your son ; and, next, because I, participating very strongly in her feelings, am myself opposed to the match. I regret being under the necessity of speaking thus, but it has become my duty so to act.”

“ Indeed !—And so you, who ought to have insisted on the foolish wench’s submission, encourage her opposition.”

“ Sir, my child, not forgetting her duty to me, feels, also, that she has a duty to perform to herself. Her happiness, is too nearly affected by the selection she may make of a husband, to justify either her or me, in acceding to a matrimonial proposition, as if it were a mere matter of course transaction.”

“ A matter of course, indeed ! Sir—this is an insult. Do you, and your daughter, mean to consider my son, as an every day sort of man ?”

“ By no means, sir!—be assured of that. No insult of *that* sort has been, or could be intended.”

“ I should think not; for, besides the property which I have long had in various parts of the country, and the shares which I hold in different public companies, the rent roll of Chiswell Square alone, now that the whole of the buildings are completed, and the houses well tenanted, exceeds four thousand pounds per annum.”

“ I am very glad to hear it.”

“ You are monstrous kind! but whether you are glad or not, four thousand pounds per annum, let me tell you, sir, is a pretty thing now a days, and the heir to such a property as that, is not likely to go begging long for a wife.”

“ I cannot deny that, sir; but I, being somewhat old fashioned, can just imagine that objects may be of immense worth, which are not supposed to have any pecuniary value; while others are, under peculiar circumstances,

any thing but desirable, though they may represent an immensity of pounds, shillings, and pence."

" I don't understand," said Mr. Chiswell.

That any thing could be intrinsically valuable, unconnected with money, was too much for his comprehension.

" Perhaps," Mr. Haversham replied, " my speech wants clearness. I will try to convey the purport of it more distinctly. In few words, my daughter and I, are not favourable to the marriage which you propose. It is not, and it cannot be pleasing, or even endurable to either."

" Well, sir, and what then? If it does not please you and your daughter, it will please me and my son, so you see there's on our side as much for it, as there can be on yours against it."

" But I hope we are not unreasonable, in considering that we ought to have some voice in this matter, and in expecting that our wishes should have some weight."

" But you *are* unreasonable, Mr. Haversham, and let me tell you, very ridiculous into the

bargain Poor folks are not to act as if they were rich ; beggars are not to give themselves airs, as if they were people of independant property.”

“ I do not know that I am yet a beggar, and if I am so, you were not obliged to remind me of it.”

“ I’m not fond of being mealy-mouthing, Mr. Haversham. You ought to know better than to provoke a man who has you in his power, by insolent, impertinent bothering.”

“ I do not know of a certainty, Mr. Chiswell, that I am altogether in your power.”

“ If you are not in my power, your estate is.”

“ Can you prove me to have committed one base, one dishonourable action ?”

“ I can prove what is a vast deal more to the purpose, that your title to this estate is defective. If put to it, I can bring forward a claimant, and perhaps these gentlemen can satisfy you, that it is also in my power to supply what has been found wanting.”

“ If there be any defect in my title deeds, as these were entrusted to you in honourable con-

fidence, it was not for you to take advantage of my imprudence. Honour and honesty, nay common decency, would forbid such a course."

"Business, sir, is business."

"Business," said Mr. Haversham, "when by that word any thing like fair and honourable transactions are indicated, I would never quarrel with ; but it too frequently happens that men of the world, when they speak of business, only mean trickery and fraud. The very opportunity I gave you for wronging me, as it proved I wished to do all that was just by you, ought to have made you disdain to take a paltry advantage of me."

"As to that, sir, my way is to look about me. If you did not look after your own interest, it was your own fault ; but for all that, I have a right to look after mine."

"Well, sir, you may take care of your interest without pressing this marriage. Name the price of your forbearance on this point. Ask largely, and I will not refuse to answer, as I think most satisfactorily."

"Your whole estate, then, is all that, under the circumstances, I demand."

“ The whole !”

“ I will not abate one shilling of my demand. And now, sir, make your choice. Call in the girl at once, or take the consequences.”

“ This is rather severe.”

“ You talk nonsense. There is no severity in it. Send for the girl ; give her with a proper settlement to my son, and all will be right. Send for the girl.”

“ Since there is no alternative left to me, I must call my daughter in.”

Mr. Haversham then passed to the door of the apartment, and desired some one without, to direct Adela to join him.

“ Well, I am very glad, very glad, indeed,” said Chiswell, affecting good humour, “ that this business is settled. Of course your daughter will not now think of refusing her consent.”

“ Miss Haversham, sir, will obey her father,” was the reply.

The door opened, and Adela made her appearance. Through a small parting between the curtains, which concealed me, I saw her advance with a diffident air, but nevertheless with

a degree of self-possession, which I had not expected to witness.

I will not attempt any description of my feelings at that moment, nor of the grief, indignation, and confusion, which came over me when I heard Mr. Haversham speak to her of the importance of meeting Mr. Chiswell's wishes, by forthwith becoming the wife of his son, for no language can do justice to the amazement and horror, which seized me, when I heard, or thought I heard, those lips which but recently had promised everlasting constancy to me, calmly express resignation and consent on the part of Adela, to be united to another, and that other Lean Iniquity.

Scarcely, notwithstanding the caution which I had received, could I so far subdue the emotion caused by what I had heard, as to remain in my hiding place. The person who had been introduced as the clergyman, commenced the performance of his task, by inquiring who was to give the bride away, and he next called on the lovers, I mean on Adela and young Chiswell, to come forward.

Lean Iniquity advanced towards the minister, and offered to take Adela by the hand. This courtesy she declined, but she stood near him, and waited with apparent composure, for the commencement of the ceremony.

CHAPTER XIX.

Mr. Haversham gives Lean Iniquity a solemn caution, to which he pays little attention—The marriage ceremony is interrupted, and Mr. Haversham becomes very unpolite—He affords Mr. Chiswell a great surprise, and afterwards does as much by me—Some extraordinary statements are made, which are followed by a perfectly common-place occurrence.

ALL was quite ready. I could imagine no new obstacle to oppose or delay the ceremony, and with anguish not unmixed with rage, and scorn for more than one of the parties present, I expected, that, in a few minutes, Adela and Lean Iniquity would be one.

It was then, that Mr. Haversham addressed the supposed bridegroom, as follows :—

“ Reflect, young man,” said he, “ the marriage vow is one which ought not to be idly pronounced. The solemn ceremony concluded, no

subsequent regret can be of the slightest avail. Once united, the tie is indissoluble. Thoughtlessly, then, to contract so binding, so lasting an engagement, were at once to commit the grossest folly, and the most awful profanation."

"Well, well, we know all that," Mr. Chiswell senior remarked, giving his son a nudge, in derision of the solemnity of Mr. Haversham.

"I know all that, sir, as my father says," replied the junior wretch; "so now go on if you please;" and saying this, while expecting the clergyman to commence, he leered round at his father and winked, in acknowledgment of the signal for mockery, which he had just received.

And then I heard the first words of the marriage ceremony read aloud. I resolved to make a last desperate effort to prevent, if possible, the solemnization of the nuptials. I was absolutely on the point of rushing from the recess, when the voice of Mr. Haversham again burst on my ear, and restrained me.

"Hold!" he exclaimed. "I cannot permit the sacrilegious outrage on decency and on reli-

gion, to be carried further. Let us have no more of this."

" What do you mean ?" demanded old Chiswell. " Hey, sir ! what the devil do you mean ?"

" That the ceremony with which you would affront Heaven—that the marriage contemplated by you and your worthy son, must not be completed."

" Then," replied the old schemer, " you must take what you get. I have a paper which you must sign, before these witnesses."

" And you, sir, *you* who have dared to hold such language to me," Mr. Haversham retorted, " must take the consequences of the crimes you have committed, and attempted to commit. For your witnesses, as you are pleased to style the two villainous confederates who attend you, they shall presently be disposed of."

" And have you the impudence, and the madness, and the stupid folly," inquired old Chiswell, in a bullying tone, " to threaten me ?"

" Not merely to threaten, but to execute."

And with these words Mr. Haversham rung a bell. Two sturdy servants instantly answered.

“ Kick that fellow down stairs,” he said, pointing to Scampo, “ and throw the parson out of the window.”

“ This is speaking to the purpose,” thought I, and a glow of exultation came over me, as I heard the lawyer perform his dance down stairs. The parson having seen with what alacrity and signal expedition, the sentence passed on his friend had been executed, threw himself headlong after him, to escape the other very awkward mode of exit, which had been prescribed for him.

“ Very well!” exclaimed old Chiswell. “ You can now do just what you please. But, Mr. Haversham, you will have the goodness to remember, there are witnesses to the assault.”

“ There *are* witnesses, more witnesses than you are aware of, sir. I wish not to do things by halves, and you, Mr. Chiswell, merit more attention than a common person. I really believe there are but few men on earth, who to the creeping, fawning meanness of the sycophant, can so coolly unite the bullying insolence of the ruffian.”

“ Be as abusive now as you please.”

Mr. Haversham looked disdainfully at the wretch, and calmly replied,

“ Abusive! abusive to you, sir! I have yet to learn, not how to abuse, but how to approach a correct description, of criminals like you and your son. The language which usually embodies scorn and abhorrence, fades into absolute insignificance before your transcendent depravity. To name you rogues, scoundrels, and wretches, were almost to compliment. If I would escape censure for stooping to flattery, I must call you fiends or devils, or something which may express superhuman atrocity. I must do this, or I shall not render justice to the surpassing demerits, of Mr. Chiswell and his son, *Lean Iniquity*.”

My New South Wales friend, jumped half a yard from the ground, at hearing so unexpectedly the name by which he had been known in “ the land of eminent personages,” and old Chiswell, was not less confounded by the same sound.

“ And now,” proceeded Mr. Haversham,

“ since you wish for witnesses, I proceed to satisfy you, that though two of your brother conspirators have been removed, there are yet persons at hand, whom you may subpœna against me in a court of justice. Then raising his voice in a manner which told that he wished it understood he was calling to me, he exclaimed, “ The moment is come. Now—now, you who hear me, stand forth.”

I sprang from the recess.

If dramatic effect was the object of Mr. Haversham, he succeeded to admiration. The confusion, wonder, and dismay occasioned by my unlooked-for appearance, can hardly be imagined. I could not help enjoying the miserable alarm and overwhelming horror, which agitated and lengthened the cadaverous visage of Lean Iniquity. I should have been well content to look on so gratifying a spectacle, but just then I perceived that another witness had started from concealment, whose presence was as formidable to me, as mine was to the Chiswells. That witness was no other than my wife.

Vastly as I approved of the uncomfortable

surprise, which Mr. Haversham had prepared for Lean Iniquity, the one which he seemed to have taken upon himself the task of securing for me, at the same time, was by no means to my taste, and seemed indeed to my understanding, a wanton and insulting experiment, made on my previously tortured feelings. I had however no time to utter an opinion, before Mr. Haversham addressed me, in a tone which was very different from that of playful levity or studied insult, so far as I was concerned.

“ You have heard,” said he, “ the threats so vilely launched at me by the elder of these two wretched miscreants, and you have not failed to remark the readiness of the youthful convict, to become the husband of Adela. They wished for the presence of witnesses, and they shall not be disappointed. In their kindness they brought an attorney and a parson to make sure of me. I have taken care to be provided with a few police officers, that they may not escape.”

“ Police officers!” stammered old Chiswell. “ Good God! and for what—what for, I beg to ask?”

“ To apprehend your son, as a felon, for returning from transportation before the period for which he was sentenced has expired, and to do as much by you for an offence of an older date.”

“ My good friend—my good friend !” cried Mr. Chiswell senior, in a supplicating tone ; “ you surely cannot mean what you say. I own I pressed a match, (perhaps, I own it, too warmly,) but it was because I thought it for the good of all parties.”

“ That is false, sir. You knew it could not be for the good of all parties.”

“ But I only did so from my anxiety to form a connection—a family connection with my esteemed friend, Mr. Haversham. I have always wished to serve you, and wish to do so still.”

“ That is false, false as hell, sir. These speeches may be spared. After the recent base and unmanly part which, you have acted, talk not to me of friendship. To an open honourable enemy, I could soon be reconciled ; to a perfidious friend never. No, sir, from any apparent

kindness on your part, I should now shrink with disgust and horror; I could only liken a professed service from you, to the kiss of Judas."

"But, Mr. Haversham, I am ready to prove my sincerity, by giving up—"

"You would abandon an unjust claim, now that you find, from your character being known it would be impossible for you to attempt enforcing it without prejudice to your neck. But, sir, I never stood in need of your forbearance in this matter. The defect in my title, which you thought you had discovered, was imaginary. I can instantly supply, what you supposed, could only be furnished by some forgery of yours. The course you have thought proper to pursue, however, has led me to inspect the whole of the papers which have come into my possession, as securities, and among them I find one which I had mislaid. It would seem to have been accidentally bound up with certain voluminous documents relating to another subject. The paper to which I now allude is an assignment for a period therein specified, of a certain plot of ground in Middlesex, near London, which I have had the

pleasure of learning from you, is now known by the name of Chiswell-square."

"Indeed! God bless me! have you got that? I—I am glad it is found—I wanted it," cried old Chiswell.

"But you will never have it," Mr. Haversham replied, with unabated sternness. "The conditions on which that ground was made over to you, have been long since satisfied. The rents, formerly accruing from it, were to be yours for a certain number of years, at the expiration of which, you ceased to have any claim on it. Many years ago, it ought to have been restored to its former owner, the late Mr. Godfrey, subject indeed to any claim that another party might have preferred."

"If Mr. Godfrey died," Chiswell replied, "I could not help it."

"His widow lived, his son survived. Why were they not put in possession of it, so far at least as you were concerned?"

Chiswell attempted not to answer.

"No matter," continued Mr. Haversham, "justice will now be done, somewhat late, it is

true, but better late than never. You Mr. Godfrey," he added, directing his speech to me, "may, from this day forward, consider yourself the sole landlord of Chiswell-square."

"How! What! Do you mean to rob me of my property, of my all, I may say," cried Chiswell.

"No, but I mean to restore to Mr. Godfrey, the property of which he has been robbed, by you."

"But, sir, the whole of the houses were built by me."

"Not by you, as I am well informed, but by unfortunate persons of slender means, whom you persuaded to take ground, at high rents, and then, under pretence of recovering those rents, before the parties could complete their works, you finished, by swindling them out of their all, in consequence of their inability to satisfy the usurious demands which you made."

"Usurious charges!"

"Usurious charges were my words. Yes, sir, proof-ample, undeniable proof, has been tendered this very day, of the usury connected with your proceedings. Need I remind you of

the ruinous penalties ordained by the legislature, to punish such extortion?"

"Sir—Mr. Haversham"—faltered Chiswell—"I—I do not know what you can mean.—Mr. Godfrey can have no right—that is—no right to those houses—to my houses."

"He has a right to his land, and to the buildings formerly on it, which you thought fit to pull down. Mr. Godfrey is not to be defrauded of his estate, because you were pleased to build upon it. You may have acted unwisely to improve the estate so much, considering the situation in which you stood, but you thought his freehold, could never be reclaimed."

Chiswell now found that his efforts to over-reach Mr. Haversham and others recoiled upon himself, and saw that they subjected him to a most formidable punishment. He, therefore, completely changed his tone, and whiningly implored the man he had insulted but a few moments before, not to reduce him to poverty.

"Talk not to me of poverty," Mr. Haversham

exclaimed, in reply. "In the case of an ordinary sinner, I might relent, lest he should be urged by want, to betake himself to dishonest courses. With you, it is different. Your instinct leads you to crime, and forgiveness, though it might for a season postpone, could not avert your destiny."

Trembling like an aspen leaf, old Chiswell made a new supplicatory appeal for mercy.

"Mercy, wretch! Mercy!" Mr. Haversham answered, sternly repeating the prayer. He added, with bitterness, which he had not till then manifested, "look not for mercy from me, whose every hope you blasted. Your crimes are so voluminous, that, not even now, have I got through the disgusting catalogue, and you still vainly hope that half your depravity will never be brought to light. Let the hope perish, and know, to your confusion, that I am acquainted with your early history."

"My early history!" Chiswell repeated, with a vacant stare, scarcely knowing what he uttered.

"Even so, and could my own profound anguish, swell the tide of bitterness, which your

other misdeeds have caused to flow, it would now rise higher than ever. The Almighty permits not often, a villain to pass undetected to his grave. My heart, long since deeply wounded, and never, never healed, has but now been made to bleed again, by information supplied, of the crimes which disgraced your younger days—those days devoted to hell and infamy, when you claimed the name of Donovan!"

The accused gave a feeble start, but horror seemed almost to have deprived him of his remaining strength, when the last word—"Donovan" sounded in his ear.

Mr. Haversham paused, and the dismay of old Chiswell was greater than ever. His whole frame was convulsed with guilty terrors, and tears of anguish deluged the villain's cheek.

"Yes, sir," Mr. Haversham continued. "I am now well aware that you are he, who, on the day of your marriage with Miss Sydenham, then wearing the assumed name of Donovan, found it convenient to decamp within an hour after the ceremony had concluded, to escape being apprehended for forgery, but subsequently re-

turned, like a thief in the night, to tear Rosalia, my beloved Rosalia, from one, whom she had blest with her hand, believing you to be no more. It was yours to rob me of all that made life desirable, and, not content with this, you effected your purpose, in a manner which subjected me to the obloquy of being the murderer of the adored object, cruelly torn from me. Deny this if you can. If you cannot disprove what I have asserted, speak not to me of mercy. Right well you know, that, not content with despoiling me of the treasure I most valued on earth, it was subsequently your fiend-like task to blast my fame, and even by means of an accusation which you knew to be false, to assail my life. You, it was, who transferred a corpse from its consecrated resting place, to my grounds, who stimulated the inquiry which followed, and then sought to give me death.—*That*, I might have pardoned, if, like a manly assassin, you had fairly struck the blow, and taken my life, without branding my name with crime, but less than this would not satisfy your vengeance.”

“ I did not—that is—”

“ Nay, speak not : denial is useless. Still pursuing your victim with relentless hate, not content with dooming him to years of sorrow in his own person, you, at length seek to wound him in that of his only child, by linking this dear object of my choice—the offspring of Rosalia, with that wretched libel on humanity, the issue, doubtless, of some former miserable victim to your love, or partner of your crimes. Such, has been your conduct to me. Your villainy has carried you too far, and your former sinnings, with your recent schemes, at length unite to ruin, and to crush, for ever, your reptile pride, even so completely, that you are compelled to shed your coward tears, in my presence and howl—this, at least, is luxury !—to me in your distress for mercy.”

The animation of Mr. Haversham, while speaking, and the series of unexpected statements which he had made, together with the strange effect produced by them on the culprit to whom they were principally addressed, had so rivetted my attention, that I scarcely remem-

bered the situation, in which I myself stood, at that moment. A pause, however, now occurred. Nature seemed almost exhausted on the one side, and the other exhibited but the pale aspect of mute despair. It was then, that I saw Mr. Haversham's eye beam kindly on me—in the next moment he glanced at my wife. I have always rather plumed myself on my skill in physiognomy, and, on this occasion, what I saw led me to expect, that congratulating me on the recovery of the property, which he had declared to be mine, he, in order to complete my felicity in the dramatic style, was about to bring forward Fan Dabsley, join our hands, and wish us happiness.

I was, however, mistaken, for he had not yet finished with the Chiswells. "While," said he, again addressing the senior, "you thought proper surreptitiously to claim a wife, never justly yours, your worthy son, the heir, it would seem, of all his father's baseness, thought proper to bestow on a friend, a wife, who was really his. Doubtless you knew of this."

"I knew—I knew not that—that"—old Chis-

well cried in a faltering voice, but was unable to proceed."

" You knew that your son was a husband, when you sought this day, to profane a sacred ceremony, by committing one more crime ; but you did not know, that I had the proof at hand. You did not expect that his true wife would attend the ceremony."

While he spoke, he looked towards the *ci-devant* Fan Dabsley, alias Jacquelina Delville, and pointed to her, as the wife of Lean Iniquity.

Of all the surprises which I had known in that important hour, this was the most astonishing, and, to confess the selfish truth, the most grateful. To find, that she, whom I called my wife, was really Mrs. Lean Iniquity Chiswell—to ascertain that she had no legal claim upon me—to learn, I say, as I speedily did, that I had never been a husband, was waking from a frightful dream—was bliss indeed !

I will not attempt to follow the course of the dialogue, which communicated to me the fullest confirmation of this most joyous intelligence ; for I was too much agitated to note all that

passed, with my wonted correctness. It will be sufficient to state the substance of it which was as follows :—Miss Dabsley, and Lean Iniquity, had tasted the sweets of wedded love, in England. Congenial virtues had brought them together in the first instance, and these did as much for them in the second ; for Lean Iniquity being sent to New South Wales, for receiving stolen goods, having previously escaped, by turning king's evidence, his consort was shortly afterwards, transported for stripping children. Hatred of each other, sincere as mutual, prevented the wife from claiming her husband, when she saw him in New South Wales, and made the latter, well disposed to decline exercising any authority over the wife. They agreed to pass themselves off as unmarried, that each might be perfectly at liberty to form new connections. Lean Iniquity, subsequently, thought he could get rid of her more securely for ever, by saddling me with her ; and she, in the hopes of defrauding me of the cash, which, it had been whispered, was in my possession, most cordially lent herself to the accomplishment of his scheme.

It had previously been planned, between old Chiswell, and his son, that the latter should find some way of returning to England, leaving his wife in the colony. The means by which he sought to do this, was by joining the Bush Rangers, and then betraying them. His failure in the first instance, and his final success, have been stated.

After I had sailed for Europe, a second letter from Adela, inclosing a new remittance of cash from her father, was received by Mrs. Chiswell, in quality of my wife. This giving a further account of advances made to Mr. Haversham, by old Chiswell, acquainted her with the affluence of her father-in-law, and with the brilliant prospects of her husband. It also made her acquainted with the exact spot, where they were likely to be found, if the latter could get back to England. In consequence of this, the moment she found her sentence remitted, which was soon done by the governor, pursuant to the assurance he had kindly given me, she forthwith applied part of the money which had been intended for my use, to pay for her passage

to England ; and this she accomplished with so little loss of time, that, being in a better sailing ship, and more favoured by the weather than I had been, she actually reached the Priory a week before I did.

She found her way to Mr. Haversham, and soon made him to understand, in what way she had been connected with the Chiswells. Lean Iniquity, and his father, were, at that time, in London ; and, in consequence, they had no knowledge that so important a visitor, had made her way to the Priory. In the fullness of her hatred, for her real husband, she omitted to state nothing that could tend to degrade him, or his connections. It was for this purpose that she told Mr. Haversham, the father was as great a villain as the son, and had formerly been compelled to fly the country, to avoid being hanged for forgery, and to change his name from Donovan, to Chiswell.

This, and other facts, which she was enabled to make known, proved, beyond all doubt, to Mr. Haversham, that Chiswell was the man, whose baseness had, in former times, caused

him so much affliction, and no sooner had this discovery been made, than it happened, that his enemy, thinking the time arrived when he might securely insist on all he thought politic to demand, ventured, to display the cloven foot, and, upon those attempts, to intimidate, with the father, which, till now, had been confined to the daughter.

The light thrown on the villain's early history, by what the woman, once called my wife, revealed, suggested to Mr. Haversham the means of defeating his malice. He was curious to know what part I would act. It was in consequence of the information he had received from the source just indicated, that he put those questions which startled me, in the course of the first interview I had with him, after my return. All along, he took the most favourable view of my conduct. The sudden recovery of Adela, from the shock inflicted by my abrupt confession, was effected by his acquainting her with the above circumstances.

Fan Dabsley, alias Jacquiline Delville, alias Mrs. Lean Iniquity, alias Mrs. Henry Chiswell,

anxious to prove her legal claim on the very opulent family with which she found herself connected, fully explained the juggling fraud by which our pretended marriage, had been effected, and she actually made my conduct appear less blameable than I could have represented it to be myself. All that had been done, she convinced Mr. Haversham, was effected by a vile and deep laid conspiracy. The witnesses who spoke to the marriage, were accomplices—the entries were all fabrications.

I have said enough of the defeat and humiliation of the Chiswells, which was now complete. Mrs. Chiswell, jun. had performed her part. She was directed by Mr. Haversham to withdraw, but assured, that, whatever might befall her husband, she should be amply provided for, in consideration of the important service she had rendered. This was, of course, a great comfort to me—I mean her withdrawing.

“ For you wretched men,” said my kind friend, sternly, addressing the Chiswells, father and son, “ I have truly told you, that the officers of justice are now in the house. You know the

dangerous situation in which you stand. You have, I may almost say, halters round your necks;—but fly. Though you merit nothing but vengeance from me. I give you one quarter of an hour; at the end of that time, the police will be in pursuit of you. Escape, if you can."

The hopeful pair to whom this intimation was conveyed, waited for no repetition of it, but instantly commenced a race. *Sauve qui peut* was their motto, and each seemed very well content that the other should be hanged, so he himself might get off.

What followed, may be easily surmised, so I will not here set down the professions of unworthiness, which I uttered, nor the kind assurances and soothing answers, which they called forth. It is enough to say, that emboldened by the generous partiality of which I still found myself the object, I at length, with a faltering voice, ventured to ask Adela, if after what had passed, I might still presume so far as to lift my eyes to that heaven of beauty, which formerly had been destined for me? I conjured her to tell me, whether she wished to be free from my

future importunity, or whether she would now justify the hope she had once sought, but in vain, to inspire ; and O ! what a moment was that, in which, handed to me by her father, with blushing softness, she answered my question, by the fondly murmured, but determined assurance,

“ I am, I will be, ever,—ever thine.”

FINIS.

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ERRATUM.

Page 206, line 16, *for* middle *read* middling.









